

Mar. 28th 1913

No 391

FAME
AND

5 Cents

FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

**AFTER A MISSING MILLION
OR THE TREASURE OF THE WRECK**

AND OTHER STORIES By A Self-Made Man



"Help! Help!" cried Jack, springing out of the hold of the wreck, followed by three hard-looking fellows, one dressed in convict stripes, who tried to seize him. Dick, waving his club and attended by Sam, rushed to aid him.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1913, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 168 West 23d Street, New York.
Entered at the New York, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Matter.

No. 391.

NEW YORK, MARCH 28, 1913.

Price 5 Cents.

AFTER A MISSING MILLION

—OR—

THE TREASURE OF THE WRECK

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

AT CALCUTTA.

"I wonder how long we're going to be stuck here?" said Jack Hunter, gazing out of the open window of a Calcutta wine shop at the kaleidoscopic scene of Hindoo life depicted on the street outside.

"Search me!" replied his companion, Dick Slade, with a yawn, due both to the heat and the ennui of their situation.

"Those coolies are the most exasperating lot of rascals that ever walked on two feet," growled Jack. "Because one of their number was accidentally killed while at work loading the ship the whole bunch quit then and there, with a half unloaded lighter alongside, and though the skipper has scraped the water front with a fine tooth comb, he can't get others, not even one, to take their places."

"And the accident happened over a week ago," said Dick. "We've been boycotted by the whole coolie fraternity, and the lines are drawn tight as a drum. We're actually helpless. I think it's an outrage, but the British authorities can't do anything to help us out. They can't make a coolie, or anybody else, work if he won't. In fact, there's no law anywhere that will compel a man to work against his will. That's why there are so many loafers in the New York City parks in summer. And New York isn't the only place where a lazy man would rather bum around than make himself useful to the community."

"But in New York, even in the case of a general strike of the longshoremen, you can always find strike-breakers ready to jump into other men's shoes; but here, with no strike, except on our vessel, we can't get a coolie for love or money under the circumstances."

"There's some sort of freemasonry among them, that's sure. They've got us dead to rights. The captain will have to come up with a bunch of money for the widow and her kids, although the rascal met his death through his own carelessness, or not another lighter will come alongside the ship."

"It's lucky it's only a matter of money nowadays. Years ago the ultimatum with the coolies was not money, but a life for a life. Unless the skipper of a vessel in the same predicament as we are gave up a member of the crew to be put to death by the rascals his ship would have to lie idle in the muddy waters of the Houghley."

"You don't mean that, do you?" said Dick.

"I do mean it. I've read of a case where the captain, driven to his wits' end under the circumstances, put it up to his men to draw lots among themselves to decide which one of them should be sacrificed for the general good. The man who drew death was handed over to a committee of the coolies, who took

him ashore, and half an hour later returned him a corpse. Then the ban on the ship was lifted and the coolies returned to work."

"And did the British authorities stand for that sort of thing?" said Dick.

"Apparently they had to."

"I'm mighty glad that custom has been done away with. From the looks of things the captain will have to pony up if the vessel is to finish getting her cargo."

"I'm thinking he will, but at the present moment he has no intention of submitting to the extortion. He told the chief mate he'd see the scoundrels in a hotter climate than Hindustan before he'd knuckle down to them, and he's a pretty stubborn old gent when his monkey's up."

"If he sticks to that our chances of parboiling in Calcutta for some time to come are good. I'm sick of the place. We've seen all that's worth seeing, and enough is as good as a feast."

"If we could get in with some people who would invite us to their houses in the suburbs we might manage to worry along pretty comfortably; but as we're only looked upon as common sailors there's not much chance of anybody of importance taking us up."

"It serves us right for running away from school and shipping to sea. What we put up with at the Academy isn't a circumstance to what we've had to submit to since we signed aboard the Morning Glory, and our fo'castle companions say we've had an easy time at that. Mike Clancy told me he's seen youngsters, and men, too, hazed almost to death by mates whose brute instincts came to the fore the moment their ship got into blue water."

"Don't talk about it, Dick. It makes me feel sore when I think what donkeys we were. The stories of the sea we were so fond of reading painted things in a different light. I guess the authors didn't know the real facts. Their heroes had things pretty much their own way. Wait till we get back. I'll write a story that will make boys' heads swim."

"It wouldn't sell worth sour apples, then. Are we going to stay here the rest of the day?"

"Do you know any place where it's cooler?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In the river where the sun deesn't hit you."

"Thanks for the information. Where do you want to go?"

"Let's go to the public library and read the papers?"

"All right. Anything to be obliging," said Jack.

The British public library was some blocks away, but they got there after a slow walk, which they varied by peeping into the stores as they passed along.

The reading-room was supplied with the principal London

up through the Ganges swamps I'll make your fortunes, and the three of us 'll go back to the States like real gents."

The idea of taking a trip anywhere, much less than the swamps of the Ganges River, was not particularly enticing to either Jack or Dick.

The man's remarks, however, indicated that he had a line on a large amount of money hidden somewhere in the said swamps, and the bare idea of a treasure hunt fired the imaginations of both boys.

"Let's hear his yarn," said Dick. "I guess it won't take him long to spin it."

"We'll hear your story, Blaine," said Jack.

"I thought you would, and I reckon when you've heard it you'll want to make the trip that'll line your trousers with more yellow boys than you can spend in twenty years, try as hard as you can. Come up to my room and I'll tell you things that'll make your mouths water or my name ain't Bill Blaine."

They accompanied him to a small room on the top floor at the back of the house, overlooking the laundry building.

It was a bright night, a crescent moon hanging low in the distant sky.

The stars seemed more numerous and to shine brighter than in the more temperate northern zone in which the boys were brought up.

The night breeze was invigorating after the heat of the day, and it had full swing around Bill's window.

The sailor shut the door, told the boys to perch themselves in the window, and drawing up the only seat in the room, a three-legged stool, sat down, produced his pipe, filled and lit it, and then began as follows:

"When I said my yarn was about a million in money I didn't tell you chaps no more than the truth, as I reckon you'll agree when I'm through."

"A million is a lot of money," said Jack.

"A matter of twenty laes of rupees," nodded the sailor.

"The money is in the currency of this empire, then?"

"Naturally, my hearty, seein' as the gold came from Delhi and the treasury of the Rajah, Ram Rusti."

"Can't say that I've ever heard of that gent," grinned Dick.

"Maybe not, shipmate. He's been dead all of thirty years."

"Did he ship the gold you're talking about?" said Dick.

"The facts show that he did," said the sailor.

"To whom? The British?"

"No; to the Nawah of Hyderabad."

"Who was he?"

"I don't know who he was. All I know is that Ram Rusti owed him the million and shipped it to him in the Kohinor, that was the name of the vessel he chartered to carry it down the Ganges."

"Well, what happened to the vessel?" asked Jack.

"Do you know what a bore is?"

"A boar!" put in Dick. "Sure. It's a wild hog."

The sailor gave a sniff of disgust.

"I don't mean that kind of a boar. I mean a bore—b-o-r-e."

"The only kind of bore spelled that way I know of is the act of making a hole either in a piece of wood or metal, or in the ground—"

"Stipulate, your education has been neglected. A bore is a tidal wave of great height and force formed at the mouths of some rivers where, owing to obstructions by bars and the form of the channel, the whole of the flow, after bein' detained, comes in in one rush of water, or in two or three big waves following each other, and carries everything before it, just as a broom sweeps a pile of dirt away at one swoop," explained the sailor.

"Oh!" ejaculated Dick, much enlightened.

"I know what you mean, but I didn't get on at first," said Jack. "I've read about those kind of tidal waves, and I believe I've heard them called bores, but it seems more natural to call them by the other name. They sometimes occur at the mouth of the Amazon, in South America, at the Hoogley and Ganges in this country, and at the Tsien-tang River in China."

"Right you are, my hearty," nodded the sailor, blowing a cloud of smoke. "Well, one of them tidal waves met the Kohinor near the mouth of the Ganges, and—that was the end of her."

"She went to the bottom with the million in money," said Jack.

"No, she didn't. She was carried up the river, the way she came, for some distance, and then flung into the swamps, where she lies to-day, hard and fast in the mud, or on some sandy spit, and the million in gold is in her hold waitin' for the kind of chaps to come along and take charge of it."

"Is that a fact?" said Jack, intensely interested, as was also his companion.

"It's a fact—as much of a fact as we three are sittin' in this room, and I'm tellin' you the story," said the sailor, knocking the ashes out of his pipe and refilling it for another smoke.

"Whereabouts in the swamps is the wreck of the Kohinor?"

"About sixty or seventy miles from the mouth of the river."

"Didn't the Rajah search for the lost vessel? I should think he would when there was so much money aboard of her."

"I reckon he did, but it's quite certain he didn't look in the right place. As no sign of her was seen anywhere along the river after the bore was over, it was naturally supposed that she reached the Indian Ocean before the bore got her, and she foundered in deep water."

"Didn't anybody escape from her to carry the news?"

"Not a soul, or else that there million in money would have been recovered."

"How long ago did this thing happen?"

"Something like forty year."

"Forty years ago?"

The sailor nodded.

"And none of the natives have come across the wreck in all that time?"

"It ain't a likely place for the natives to go snoopin' around. The swamps are almost entirely surrounded by a dense jungle, full of tigers, jackals, cobras, and other live stock of their kind. I opine that when the ship fetched up in the place where she's been all these years that most of her people were alive aboard. If they'd had a boat left they could have saved themselves most probably, but when they started out to escape through the jungle on foot, I reckon the snakes and the wild animals got 'em. At any rate none of them ever showed up."

"How came you to learn about this treasure ship, and where is she?" asked Jack, beginning to feel some doubts about the sailor's veracity.

Blaine eyed the boy for nearly a minute before he replied, and Jack wondered if he was trying to concoct some reasonable answer.

"I don't like to tell you, shipmate, for fear you might get cold feet," he said.

"How?"

"I got my information from a sailor who actually saw the wreck, went aboard of her and fetched away a bucket full of the gold."

"A bucketful out of a million wasn't so much," said Jack, not putting much stock in the sailor's explanation.

"It wasn't a big bucket, but it held about \$30,000. He was satisfied with it and didn't want to go back for any more, for he considered the risk too great."

"It's the risk you think would give us cold feet?"

"Yes, if you two ain't got good nerve, and are willin' to take chances to make yourselves rich for the rest of your lives."

"There is generally a risk attached to anything that's worth havin'."

"I reckon if we three go properly prepared for what's before us that we'll get through all right. I ain't hankerin' to turn up my toes yet awhile, but I'll venture up into them swamps for a third of the money I know is there."

"Did you see the gold that the sailor brought away with him?"

"I saw a bagful of it."

"And you feel confident the man told the truth about how he got it?"

"He told the truth all right. He gave me proof of it, besides the money."

"What other proof did he give you?"

"I'll tell you. He didn't go up huntin' for that treasure alone. The fact of the matter is he didn't know anythin' about the Kohinor bein' stranded up in the Ganges marshes. He was stayin' at this lodgin'-house waitin' for a chance to ship, when one night a couple of Britishers walked in, had several drinks and then asked Nigger Sal if she would introduce them to a couple of her lodgers who could be depended on for a short cruise of the Ganges if they were well paid and well fed. Sal said she'd just the chaps they wanted, and if they came across with a ten-spot she'd make them acquainted. They anteed up and got the chap I mentioned and his chum. The Britishers offered them £20 apiece for the trip, which they said wouldn't take over ten days, there and back, and assured them they'd live on the fat of the land. Naturally such pay, not speakin' of the grub, made the two chaps curious to learn what kind of expedition the party was bound on. The Britishers told them they were to go in a steam launch, but refused to disclose the object of the excursion, tellin' them they'd find out when the launch reached her

destination. The £20 caught them, for they were strapped and owed Sal money and room hire. They started from the edge of the Sunderbunds, penetrating the swamps by way of one of the small creeks that cut the swamps up into islands. They met no man on the way, but they ran against some of the inhabitants of the jungle. The launch ran foul of a small island at dusk one night, and one of the sailors jumped ashore to push her clear. He stepped on a cobra lying in the swamp grass, was bitten and died two hours later. Next mornin' as they were passing an overhangin' bank a tiger leaped aboard the launch and killed one of the Britishers. The sailor who was left was for turnin' around and gettin' out of the swamps as quick as they could. The coolie who acted as cook and steward backed him up. The surviving Britisher objected. He said they only had a short distance to go, and he'd give them £200 each if they stood by him. Then they wanted to know what he was after that he could afford to pay so much, which looked like a fortune to the pair. The Britisher up and told them about the wreck and the money. That settled it, they agreed to hold on. They reached the wreck and saw the bags of money, each sealed with the signet ring of the Rajah's treasurer. It looked like a short job to take the money aboard the launch, and as it was almost night, they arranged to break the bags early next mornin'.

"What prevented them? And what happened to the Englishman and the coolie, for according to your statement only the sailor got away, and he took only a small bucketful of the gold," said Jack, intensely interested in the denouement of the yarn.

Bill Blaine winked his eye solemnly.

"You won't get cold feet if I tell you?" he said.

"We haven't positively agreed to stand in with you yet. Before we do we must understand all the chances we've got to take," said Jack.

"I dunno as you'll take the same chances them chaps took. They went up there in an unhealthy season. I don't think I'd run the risk myself if things wasn't a bit different now."

"Well, go on."

"The coolie took sick after supper, went out of his head around midnight, and jumped into the swamp. That was the end of him."

"What ailed him—the swamp fever?" said Jack.

"No—cholera."

"The dickens!"

"When mornin' came the Britisher and the sailor were down with it, too."

"And the Englishman died?"

"He did, but the sailor didn't."

"Of course not, for he got back."

"He was weak as a cat for several days, and when he felt himself comin' round his one idea was to get out of the swamps. He was too weak to haul even one bag of the gold aboard the launch, so he took the bucket, cut a bag open and filled it with the golden coin. He nearly went crazy at the sight of so much money, and only he was level-headed he'd never got back, either. He decided that a bucketful would do him, put it aboard and sheered off from the wreck. He never knew how he reached the Ganges, but when he found himself on the river, clear of the swamps, he sung all the songs he knew. He reached this port, took the gold ashore in a couple of cracker boxes, and never went nigh the launch again. That's all. Now you know as much about the treasure as I do, except one thing."

"What's that?"

"The most direct way to reach the wreck."

"The sailor told you the way to get there?" said Jack.

"He gave me this chart which he took from the clothes of the Britisher after he was dead."

Blaine pulled a piece of oil skin from his pocket.

Unwrapping it, he took out an oblong piece of drawing paper.

On this was sketched the route followed by the ill-fated party.

The Ganges was shown from its mouth up to a certain distance.

The swamps were outlined.

The position of the wreck was indicated by a cross in red ink.

Jack observed that it lay on the left side of the river.

He also noticed that the route led into the swamps from the edge of what appeared to be an island near the left shore of the river.

He saw by the compass bearings marked on the chart that the launch had followed a course due northeast.

His sharp eyes likewise made out a note in small writing

which said that the wreck lay about one-third of a nautical degree, or approximately twenty miles, from the Ganges.

Dick looked at the chart, saw all that Jack did, and forgot their significance as soon as the paper was back in the sailor's hands.

That was the difference between Jack and Dick.

One was observant and made mental notes for future use, the other wasn't.

"Well, my hearties, do we get a boat and make the trip?" said Blaine.

"We must consider it," said Jack.

The sailor looked at them and blinked.

"All right. Think it over 'tween this and mornin' and let me have your answer," he said.

"We'll do it. Now perhaps you'll show us the shortest way to the water front."

"What's the use of you goin' back to your ship to-night? It's goin' on one. The room next to mine ain't occupied. You can turn in there and I'll stand the damage, which won't be much," said Blaine.

Neither Jack nor Dick cared to sleep in Nigger Sal's rookery, but the sailor was insistent, and he had his way as usual.

He showed the boys into the next room, lighted the lamp on the wall for them, and then, slyly removing the key from the inside, he transferred it to the outside, and wishing his new acquaintance good-night, shut the door and locked it.

CHAPTER IV.

JACK AND DICK AGREE TO GO AFTER THE MILLION.

The boys heard the key turn on the outside.

Jack walked to the door and tried the knob.

"The rascal has locked us in," he said.

"Why should he do that?" said Dick, uneasily. "He must be up to some game."

"I guess he wanted to make sure that he'd find us here in the morning."

"We didn't intend to run away, though I'm not stuck on sleeping in this place."

"After confiding to us the story of the treasure wreck, he evidently intends to keep us under his eye. He expects we will agree in the morning to stand in with him on the trip for the million in gold."

"I don't think I care to take the chances of the swamps in his company even for a big share of the million."

"The two of us are a match for him if he tries any funny business; but I don't believe he will. It's to his interest to treat us fairly."

"I'll bet after we get the gold, if we do go to the wreck, he will find some excuse to do us out of our share of the treasure if he can."

"Oh, I don't know. If he gets his flukes on a third of a million he'll never be able to spend it during the rest of his life."

"Maybe not, but that fact won't prevent him from trying to hold on to the biggest part of the money. It will go against his grain to see us carry off more of the treasure than himself."

"If we consent to go he must put the terms down in black and white—we are to have a third each."

"Suppose he goes back on his agreement?"

"I guess the two of us can make him keep to it."

"Maybe we can, but he looks like a shifty sort of rascal, and as he knows we'll pull together, if his purpose is to do us, he'll work the game somehow."

"We'll keep on the watch and see that he doesn't get the chance to do us."

"You talk as if you'd made up your mind to make the trip."

"The gold at the end of it is rather enticing."

"But the skipper will have something to say on the subject."

"Pooh! The ship is likely to lie here three or four weeks more, and we'll be able to make the trip in half that time. The Englishmen figured on ten days at the outside."

"They had a steam launch. And that brings up the important matter of where are we going to get a suitable boat, stocked with the provisions we'll need on the trip? Bill Blaine doesn't look like a party who had any superfluous coin."

"I suppose he looks to us to help the good cause along."

"We haven't any funds to speak of."

"Probably he thinks we have money and that's why he's made up to us."

"Then he'll be disappointed when we tell him in the morning that we haven't."

"Maybe he counts on us borrowing the necessary funds from Nigger Sal, as he calls her."

"She's not likely to lend us a whole lot without security."

"I imagine it'll cost £25, or \$125 at least, to get any kind of suitable sailing boat and stock her with food enough to last us while we're away."

"I don't doubt it."

"So unless Mr. Bill Blaine can get the woman to finance the expedition I don't see much chance of our starting out."

"We'd need a couple of rifles to stand off the tigers and cobras."

"If the cap'n was willing we should go off on a short trip, presumably for pleasure, we might be able to borrow his Remington and the chief mate's, too."

"We ought to have a couple of revolvers also."

"I dare say we could borrow them when we asked for the rifles."

The skipper would want to know where we were going."

"We'd tell him up the Ganges."

"Suppose he was curious to know why we were going up that river."

"I'd have some explanation ready to hand him."

"Well, it must be after one now. Let's turn in."

Jack looked out of the window and spied a rope dangling from the roof close to their window.

It ran all the way down to the yard.

It suggested a way of escape from the room and house.

He called Dick's attention to it.

"By going down the rope we can give Blaine the slip," he said.

"Let's do it. He had no right to lock us in here."

"All right. Follow me."

In another moment Jack was swinging on the rope.

Dick waited till he got down to the ground and then he followed.

They walked to the corner of the alley and saw no one there.

The bar-room was still in full blast, but Nigger Sal was not there.

A dark-skinned man was in charge.

The boys hurried past the entrance and reached the street.

They went back about a block, and there encountered a policeman.

He directed them how to find their way to the water front at the point where they knew they would find a coolie boatman.

Half an hour later they tumbled up the ship's side, entered the fore-castle and turned into their bunks.

Along about nine next morning a boat came alongside the Morning Glory, and Bill Blaine presented himself on deck.

Looking around he spied the two boys leaning over the bulwark on the other side looking at what was going on around them.

"Well, my hearties, you gave me the slip last night," he said.

Jack and Dick whirled around and faced the hard-looking sailor.

"We did it because you locked us in the room. What did you do that for?"

"I wanted to keep anybody from bothering you."

"We could have locked ourselves in and that would have answered the same purpose."

"Have you made up your minds to make the trip?" said the sailor, not noticing Jack's reply.

"Perhaps you'll tell us where the money is coming from to hire a good boat and provision her?"

"You needn't worry about that, shipmates. I'll attend to that."

"Then you have plenty of money?"

"No, I haven't, but I can get all we need. After we get the million you chaps will pay half of the expenses."

"If we get the treasure the expense won't cut much of a figure."

"Of course it won't. I don't care if I stand everything if you chaps will go. I can't go alone, and I don't know anybody in this port I can trust. You fellows being boys, I've figured I can take a chance on you."

"You guarantee that each of us shall have a third of what we get on the wreck?"

"That's understood."

"We will put it down on paper and all sign it so there'll be no misunderstanding afterward."

"You can draw up the paper and I'll sign it. Three hundred

thousand is as much coin as I want to enjoy life from now on."

"Don't you think you could have a good time on a quarter of that?"

"Yes, and less than a quarter, but if I get \$300,000 I'll swim in good times. With your shares you boys won't need to work any more. You'll be able to live like young gents for the rest of your lives. Why, I should think you'd be crazy to go with me."

"We're not crazy to face tigers and cobras, not to speak of the chance of catching the cholera in the swamps."

"This is the healthy season of the year. You won't get the cholera."

"Why didn't the Englishmen wait till the right time?"

"Because they were fools. They thought of nothin' but the money they were after."

"What kind of craft are you going to get?"

"A covered sloop. We'll anchor nights as far from the banks as we can, and then the tigers and cobras can't get at us."

"Who's going to do the cooking? We can't."

"I'm goin' to take a young nigger along. He'll go for £5."

"Then there'll be four of us?"

"That's all, and only us three will divvy on the gold."

"Well, you can count me in if Dick here will go," said Jack.

"Good!" said the sailor, with a look of satisfaction. "You'll go, matey?" he added, looking at Dick.

"I'll go whenever Jack is willing to go," replied the lad.

"Then the matter is settled," said Blaine. "If you want me to sign a paper bring it to Nigger Sal's place and I'll put my name to it."

"When do you think of starting?" said Jack.

"As soon as things are ready. Day after to-morrow if I can make it."

"We'll have to ask leave from the skipper."

"What's the use? He doesn't need you till the ship's ready for sea, and that won't be soon from the look of things," he grinned. "When you've got your shares of the million you won't want more to do with this hooker."

"Probably not, but it's not lucky to count one's chickens before they are hatched. We might fail to find the wreck, or somebody else might have got wind of the Rajah's missing million, in which contingency we stand to get left."

"Don't worry. Me and Tom Smith are the only ones, barrin' yourselves, that know anythin' about the wreck in the Ganges swamps. Smith has no further use for it, that's why he passed the chart over to me. We'll find the money waitin' for us."

"I hope so. As you think of starting so soon you must have the craft we're going to use in sight."

"I have. Get into my boat alongside and I'll take you to see her."

"How does it happen you're able to get the boat you want at a moment's notice?" said Jack, thinking it rather odd.

"I've had that sloop in mind for more'n a month past, but I didn't see no chance of usin' her before I fell in with you chaps."

"You are sure you can get her?"

"Certain, if she ain't been chartered since I came aboard here."

"Who does she belong to?"

"Nigger Sal."

"Is that so? How came she to have the sloop?"

"She's got several that she rents out to anybody that'll pay her price."

"She's a woman of business."

"She's the smartest petticoat in Calcutta."

"Some women are built that way. Is she married?"

"Not she. No man is good enough for her. A dozen have tried to get her, for she's got bank account as big as a mountain, but she isn't for blowin' in her good money on any man. Well, are you comin', mates?"

The boys went with him after asking permission of the second mate, and were taken on board a well-built sloop of small dimensions, about thirty feet long.

She had two jibs and a mainsail, and was steered by a small wheel, the helmsman having a small binnacle with its compass before him.

The anchor was held by a small but strong chain, and was hoisted to the bows by means of a drum, operated with a crank.

As the strain was divided among the cogs one man could do the lifting, but the process was somewhat slow.

There was a small cook-room forward, entrance to which was had through a small deck hatch.

The hold lay between it and the cabin aft, and also extended under both.

It was not large, but several millions of dollars in gold coin, in bags, could be stowed in it.

"It is just the craft for us," said the sailor.

"I think she is, provided the wind holds. In a calm we'd have to lay to and whistle for a breeze," said Jack.

"It's a good bit safer than the steam launch the Britishers went in."

"We're going to try and borrow a couple of rifles from the ship to stand off the wild beasts with."

"Do it. I'll have one aboard, too. Three of them are better than one."

"If the captain doesn't object to our leaving the ship for a few days we'll be ready whenever you are."

"If he does object, what then?"

"We'll go anyhow."

"That's the way to talk, my hearty. I thought you were a lad of spirit."

After seeing all they wanted of the sloop the boys were taken back to the ship and the sailor started back for the landing, telling the lads he'd meet them next morning at a certain hour on the water front.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER A MISSING MILLION.

The boys saw the captain that afternoon and told him they had received an invitation to take a short trip up the Ganges, covering perhaps a week, and asked permission to go.

They got it, also the loan of the two rifles and the carpenter's revolver.

After dinner they went ashore, but came back in time for supper.

Next morning they met Bill Blaine at the appointed place, and the sailor told them the sloop would be ready that afternoon.

"All right," replied Jack. "We have permission to go, and you can send a boat for us at any time."

He showed the sailor the paper they wanted him to sign. He read it over and said it was all right.

"Come along with me to Nigger Sal's. She wants you to sign the paper I gave her for the £25 I borrowed of her. She's to get £30 inside of a month," he said.

Jack and Dick did not mind visiting the lodging-house in broad daylight, and went along with Blaine.

When they entered the place they found an altercation going on between the proprietress and a half-drunken ruffian, a stranger in Calcutta from a newly-arrived steamer.

The fellow wanted to impress on Sal that he owned the bar-room while he was in it, and no man or woman who stood in two shoes could prevent him doing as he pleased.

The woman told him that she didn't allow no man to talk that way to her in her own house.

"What are you going to do about it, you nigger wench?" he replied, aggressively.

To call Sal a nigger wench, or "Nigger Sal" to her face, was to grossly insult her.

Quick as a flash she hauled off and smashed the stranger in the jaw.

Sal was something of a slugger, and the man went reeling half way across the room, and fell to the floor close to Jack.

With a terrible imprecation he sprang up, drew a revolver and aimed it point blank at the woman.

Jack saw a tragedy coming, and he did his best to prevent it.

He knocked up the stranger's arm just as he pulled the trigger.

The bullet hit the bunch of black hair Sal carried on the top of her head, disarranging it, and she realized that but for the American boy's quick action she would have got the ball in the forehead, and that would have ended her career.

Jack seized the revolver to prevent the man from getting another shot, and a fierce struggle ensued between them.

Then both Blaine and Dick chipped in and the fellow was disarmed.

Sal called up several of her crooked friends and gave them orders to do up the man.

The stranger was torn from the grasp of Blaine and the boys, and was hustled into a side room, where a set of brass knuckles put him to sleep, and then he was beaten and kicked till he was a mass of bruises.

After that he was carried off through an underground passage and dumped into a side street, where he was subsequently found by a policeman and sent to the hospital.

As there was no doubt that Jack had saved Sal's life, he found himself an important personage in the bar-room.

Sal gave him a bear's hug and a rousing kiss, and told him

that she was his friend for life, and he was at liberty to draw on her for all the money he wanted while he remained in Calcutta and not repay a cent.

She invited everybody in the room to drink at her expense, and all hands at once gravitated toward the bar.

Jack and Dick took some more of the woman's special brand of light wine, and then Blaine took them aside.

"You've done a big thing for yourself, Hunter," said the sailor. "No one ever saw Sal hug and kiss a man before. She told you she was your friend from now on and you can gamble on it she is. The chap who would raise his hand against you down in this locality after this might as well order his coffin beforehand."

"What do you suppose those fellows have done to the man who made the trouble?" asked Jack.

"Made a corpse of him, probably, or a candidate for the hospital. If it was dark he'd have gone into the river in short order."

"Suppose he'd killed Sal?"

"He'd have been cut to pieces on the spot."

"Sal is at liberty now. Tell her we're ready to sign that paper for the £30."

"As she knows you're goin' with me, I guess the paper is good enough as it stands. I'll ask her, though."

Blaine went over and interviewed the woman.

She told him she didn't want the signatures of the boys now, and, furthermore, as he was the cause of Jack coming there in time to save her life, she'd call the debt off, and he needn't consider that he owed her a cent.

"You and the boys can have the use of the sloop as long as you want. When you're through with her fetch her back. Send Hunter over here."

The sailor went back and reported Sal's words to the boys.

"We've got the whole outfit for nothin'," he said, with a grin. "If we needed more money we could get it from her as easy as winkin'. You're as solid as a rock with her, Hunter. Go to the bar. She wants to see you."

Jack went over and Sal offered him a handful of English sovereigns.

The boy refused to take them, saying he had all the money he wanted.

She insisted, and as a compromise he took ten of them.

As there was nothing to detain them there any longer, the three left the house.

"How are you off for funds? Got enough?" said Jack to Blaine.

"I could use a couple of sov's," he said.

Jack handed him three.

"What time this afternoon do you think we'll get under way?" said Jack.

"About three," said the sailor.

"Then Dick and I will return to the ship and get ready to go."

Blaine went with them to the water front and then started off to finish the business in connection with the sailing of the sloop.

When the boys reached the ship they made a small bundle of such articles as they felt they would need while on the trip.

Then they got the rifles and a supply of cartridges.

Their preparations were all completed when dinner was ready.

The other members of the crew wanted to know where they were going.

"Up the Ganges a short distance," replied Jack.

"What do you expect to shoot?" said one of the sailors.

"A tiger or two, maybe, or a cobra, if one gets in our way."

"So you're going tiger hunting, are you? Better make your will before you leave the ship," grinned the sailor.

"You needn't worry about us. We'll get back all right," said Jack, walking away.

At half-past three a boat, rowed by a boy as black as the ace of clubs, came alongside the Morning Glory made fast, and clambered on board.

"I's come fo' Jack Hunter and Dick Slade," he said to a sailor.

"There they are yonder, talking to the second mate," said the seaman, pointing.

The young darkey approached the group in question.

"Beg yo' pardon, but I's come fo' Jack Hunter and Dick Slade," said the colored youth.

"My name is Hunter," said Jack. "Did Bill Blaine send you for us?"

"I reckon dat he done dat, sah," replied the visitor.

"Are you the cook of the sloop?"

"I's cook, steward and generalissimo, sah," grinned the black boy.

"What do you mean by generalissimo?"

"I mean dat I do a little ob eberyting."

"What's your name?"

"Sam Johnsing."

"You mean Johnson, don't you?"

"Dat am right—Johnsing. Yo' am from de States, ain't yo'?"

"Yes."

"I's from de States, too."

"That so? What part?"

"From Baltimore."

"How came you to be out here in Calcutta?"

"Golly, I came out heah as ship's cook an bottle washer."

"When did you come?"

"'Bout six months ago."

"Why didn't you return in the ship?"

"Gosh! De ship done run away and fo'got me."

"You mean you ran away from the ship?"

"No, sah. De ship run away."

"Well, Sam, we're ready to go with you," said Jack

They bade the officers and men good-by for the time being, embarked in the boat with the black boy, and were rowed to the sloop, which bore the name of "Sally" on her stern.

As soon as they had stowed their traps in the little cabin they went forward to hoist the anchor and haul up the jibs and mainsail.

Bill Blaine, acting as skipper, stood in the narrow standing room with his hands on the wheel.

A good breeze was blowing and they were soon bowling down the Hoogly toward the sea, which was 100 miles distant by the river.

The Hoogly itself is a branch of the Ganges, but as the swamps where the wreck lay were down near the mouth of the Ganges delta, the shortest way to reach their destination was to make for the Bay of Bengal and sail around, which was the course they were pursuing.

The sloop was capable of sailing ten miles an hour in a fair breeze.

The wind they had enabled the little craft to put her best foot forward, but even at that they couldn't expect to get out of the river much before two in the morning.

Then it would take them fully twenty-four hours to strike the part of the Ganges delta they intended to make.

If luck ran with them they might expect to be in the neighborhood of the swamps in about forty-eight hours.

All that Bill Blaine explained to the boys as they sailed down the river, after passing out of sight of Calcutta.

And now that they were actually bound for the wreck of the Kohinoor, and her missing million, the nerves of the two boys tingled with excitement at the thought of coming into possession of enough gold to make them independent for life.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MYSTERIOUS BRIG.

Although sailing was no novelty to the two young sailors, still they enjoyed the trip down the Hoogly that afternoon very much indeed.

It was a different sensation for them to be on a lively little craft, with no particuiar work to do, and practically their own bosses.

In many respects it partook of a pleasure trip.

Although the Hoogly is dangerous sailing for ships and other large craft, owing to the shifting sands, it had no terrors for the little sloop that skimmed the surface like a gull.

They passed many native villages, and were often a long time out of sight of any habitation at all.

As six o'clock approached and the sun got low down in the sky, the pleasant odor of food cooking forward in the little galley below the deck reached the noses of the three in the standing room or cockpit.

"Makes a chap feel hungry, eh, Dick?" said Jack.

"That's what it does. Smells like some kind of fish he's frying."

At that moment Sam Johnson stuck his head up through the hatch.

Then he slapped a wide tray filled with smoking dishes and a pot of coffee on the deck.

Springing out of the cooking quarters he picked up the tray and came aft with it.

He had set the table before starting to cook, so all he had to do was to spread out the viands and announce that supper was ready.

"Take the wheel, Sam," said Blaine, "and keep her on her course. If anythin' heaves in sight ahead, call me."

"Yes, sah," said Sam.

"Step inside, mates, and fall to," said the sailor to the boys.

Being hungry, and the odor of the fried fish exceedingly appetizing, they needed no urging, and their legs were soon under the small table.

Blaine poured out the coffee and passed the cups around before sitting down himself, then he helped himself to a whole fish, a liberal supply of fried potatoes, grabbed three slices of fresh bread, and sailed in.

"This is a fine lay-out," said Dick. "Sam Johnson has our ship's cook beaten a mile."

"Hear that, Sam?" roared Blaine through the door.

"What's dat, sah?" answered Sam, who hadn't heard the compliment.

The sailor roared the remark of Dick to him.

The black boy grinned, showing a splendid set of white teeth. Presumably he was greatly tickled.

Supper over, Jack was sent to relieve Sam.

Blaine pulled out and started his pipe, the smoke whirling astern in whisps.

The sun disappeared and darkness spread over the scene.

The sailor and Dick sat to the windward where they commanded a clear view of their course ahead.

The sloop, though careened to the leeward, under the weight of the wind, held steady.

Sam, in his bare feet, carried the dishes back to the galley where, after eating his own supper, he turned to and washed them.

A British steamer from England was coming up the river under full steam, all aglow with lights.

Several small sailing craft were also bound in toward Calcutta.

The night being bright, as it always is in that latitude when the sky is not overcast, gave them plenty of light to see a good distance ahead, and thus avoid running into any craft coming toward them.

The conversation dwelt chiefly on the probability of a successful run to the swamps and the finding of the wreck with the gold on board.

Jack remained at the wheel till ten, when Dick went on duty.

"Better turn in, mate," said Blaine. "I'm goin' to keep watch till we're out of the river, which won't be much before two. As soon as we get into the bay, with a clear stretch before us, I'll call you and turn in myself for a spell."

That being settled, Jack turned in on one of the bunks and was soon asleep.

Bill let Dick steer until midnight, and then sent him into the cabin.

At half-past two the sloop was clear of the river and heading east by south.

Half an hour later Bill called Jack and put him in charge.

"There ain't nothin' in sight," said the sailor. "Keep her as she is. If the wind veers around you ought to know what to do. If you don't, rouse me up."

From that on till after sunrise Jack enjoyed the new sensation of steering with all hands but himself asleep below.

Then Blaine turned out, took a look around and relieved him.

He turned in for another nap and was awakened by Dick telling him to get up, as breakfast was on the table.

Nothing of special interest happened that day.

Soon after breakfast the wind dropped considerably and they went along during the better part of the day on a nearly even keel and at a slower speed.

The boys alternated at the wheel, Blaine putting in his time sleeping.

Sam sat in the cockpit and talked with them.

He proved a very entertaining young darkey.

Blaine took the wheel after supper, remarking that he was good for all night.

He called Jack at sunrise, and shortly afterward Sam turned out.

They were in the neighborhood of the delta of the Ganges now, and the sailor proposed to take the nearest arm of water in.

As the Sally rounded a point of land, Jack, who was alone at the wheel, made out a small brig close in shore flying a British ensign upside down.

This was a signal of distress.

The wind was very light, and though the more important sails of the brig were spread, she was making very little headway.

She was heavily loaded, for she sat deep in the water. Jack couldn't see a soul on board of her.

He shouted to Sam, and when the negro put his head out of the scuttle, Jack told him to come aft and wake up Blaine, who had turned in for a brief snooze.

When the sailor came out of the cabin Jack pointed out the brig to him.

"Something is the matter aboard of her. See the flag?" he said.

Blaine got the spyglass he had brought along and examined the brig through it.

"Run alongside of her, and we'll see what's wrong," he said.

Then he went forward where Sam was looking at the stranger in wonder.

Ten minutes later they were close enough to hail her, and Blaine did several times without receiving any notice.

Nobody appeared on her fore-castle deck or at the bulwark to see who was shouting to them.

Several ropes were hanging in careless fashion over her side, and Jack laid the sloop alongside where Blaine could seize one.

The sloop came to a stop and Jack abandoned the wheel and joined the sailor.

"Hold on while I go aboard and investigate," said Blaine.

Jack seized the rope and the sailor was up and over the bulwark in a jiffy.

Just then Dick came out of the cabin and was astonished to find the sloop lying alongside the larger craft.

He went forward to question Jack.

"What's all this about?" he asked.

"This craft appears to be in trouble," replied Jack. "Blaine had gone aboard to learn what's wrong."

"Did they hail you?" asked Dick.

"No. I haven't seen any one aboard of her yet. Looks as if she was deserted, but I can't see any reason for that. Besides, the boats are all at the davits, so the people must be aboard of her. Blaine hailed her several times as we approached, but no attention was paid to his shouts."

"Looks kind of queer, don't you think?" said Dick.

"It certainly does. Crawl up and take a look, or hold on here and I'll go up."

Dick went up, for he was full of curiosity.

"What do you see?" asked Jack as his companion got astride of the bulwark.

"Nothing moving. The door of the galley is wide open, but no one appears to be in there, and there's no smoke from the stovepipe. There's no one at the wheel."

"You don't see Blaine?"

"No."

As he spoke the sailor came reeling out of the cabin passage like a drunken man and fell on the deck.

"Holy mackerel!" ejaculated Dick.

"What's the matter?" asked Jack.

"Blaine just staggered out of the cabin and he's lying on the deck where he fell. Somethin's wrong."

"Get down and see what's the matter with him," said Jack in some excitement.

When Dick disappeared he made fast the brig's rope to a cleat near the bowsprit and called Sam to hold the sloop close to the brig.

Then he scrambled up to the bulwark.

Now he had a good view of the deck himself.

He saw Dick leaning over the sailor, who lay quite motionless.

He sprang on deck and ran over.

"What's the matter with him?" he asked.

"I don't know. He's unconscious."

"Help me get him over to the side."

They dragged Blaine to the bulwark.

"I'll go and get some of the rum Blaine brought along. That ought to pull him around," said Jack.

He was back on the sloop in a twinkling, and as quick as possible he came back with a rum bottle and a glass.

Some of the liquor was poured down the sailor's throat.

"Fan him with your hat, Dick," said Jack.

In a short time Blaine began to revive, but he raved strangely, and it was some little time before he recovered his wits.

"What happened to you, Blaine?" asked Jack.

The sailor drew in several gulps of air before making an answer.

"What happened to me? Blamed if I know. There's four corpses in the cabin sittin' 'round the table playin' cards," he said.

"Four corpses!" ejaculated Jack.

"Sure's you live. I reckon they're the skipper, two mates

and a passenger. I thought they were alive at first, for exceptin' for the glassy, starin' look in their eyes, and lack of motion, they look as natural as life. It's certain they ain't been dead long."

"Holy smoke!" cried Dick. "They must have been murdered."

"They don't show no sign of it."

"But they couldn't all die of heart failure, or something of that kind, all at one time," said Dick.

"Well, there ain't no sign of violence, nor a speck of blood."

"You are sure they're dead?" said Jack.

"Positive. If you don't believe me go in and look at them. You'd take 'em for wax figgers at a museum, only they ain't reached the ghastly stage yet."

"I wonder what killed them?" said Dick.

"Kind of mystery, I reckon," said Blaine. "Maybe there's some kind of poison in the cabin air. I was took dizzy all at once while lookin' at them, and I thought I should have tumbled right over. I made for the door, and that's all I remember. Where did you chaps pick me up?"

"Outside the passage door. I saw you stagger out and fall over," said Dick.

"There's somethin' wrong in the cabin, you can depend on it. You'd better not go in there."

"Maybe a carton of ammonia got broke and the fumes suffocated the men while they were at the tables?" suggested Jack.

"No, it ain't ammonia. I know what that smells like. Besides, I didn't smell a thing. Whatever it was got hold of me as quick as lightnin', and nearly done me up."

"I don't know what it could be if it doesn't smell," said Jack. "But how about the crew? What killed the people in the cabin couldn't have crossed the deck in the open air and entered the fo'castle."

"If the men ain't in the fo'castle I don't know where they are," said Blaine. "None of the brig's boats are gone. You can see the four of them hangin' inside the davits covered up. And the small boat is still battered down on the roof of the galley."

"Who's game to follow me into the fo'castle?" said Jack.

"I'll go with you," said Dick.

"No," said Blaine. "You go alone, Jack, and give a yell if there's anythin' out of the way there. Then we'll come after you."

The three went over to the opening of the fore-castle, which was reached by a short stationary ladder.

They looked down and saw that the slush lamp was still burning dimly there.

Jack started down.

When he reached the bottom he looked around.

On most of the bunks lay a motionless form—some with blankets thrown over them and some half dressed, with their legs out as if in the act of getting up.

Not a sound was to be heard—not a snore, or even a deep breath.

As Jack gazed awe-struck, something seemed to grip him by the throat.

His head swam, and he felt himself falling.

"Help! Help!" he shouted.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SLOOP GOES ON HER WAY.

The next thing Jack knew he was lying on deck with the taste of rum in his mouth, and his two companions fanning him with their hats.

When he was able to speak, the sailor said:

"You caught the same thing I did. Can you tell what it was?"

"No. I didn't smell anything. There is surely some kind of gas down there. The fact that it's in both the cabin and the fo'castle shows it must come from the hold. There's some deadly chemical in the cargo that's broken loose."

"Or else the cargo has sweated," said the sailor.

"What kind of cargo sweats?" asked Dick.

"Oh, different kinds after passing through a long spell of hot weather."

The sailor mentioned a number of commodities that were subject to the process.

"They throw off a vapor that you can't see, but you can usually smell it, and take warning in time," he said.

"You can't smell this, so I think it must be something in the cargo, in the chemical line, that's got loose and spread through the brig," said Jack.

"I thought chemicals always gave out a smell," said Blaine.

"They do; but this may be some new kind of preparation

that has no odor. Whatever it is it's mighty deadly. Every man jack below is dead in his bunk."

"Did you see them?" said Dick.

"Yes, but not very distinctly."

"But if the gas, or whatever it is, killed the people in the cabin and the fo'castle, that doesn't account for the watch on deck, and the officer who was in charge of the brig," said Blaine. "One of the mates, and half of the crew, should have been on deck, and when the watch was changed they would have discovered the state of affairs below."

"Maybe they did and were overcome themselves like you and Jack," said Dick.

"It doesn't seem likely all of them would be knocked out," said Blaine.

"But you said you saw two mates playing cards with the captain and somebody you took to be a passenger. That would show that neither mate was on duty, and one of them ought to have been," said Dick.

"That's right. I can't account for that."

"What are we going to do about this thing? We'll have to put in at the nearest port and report the brig, and the state of affairs aboard of her."

"Of course."

"Say," said Jack, suddenly. "Somebody must have been wise to this thing. How else would the English ensign be flying upside down?"

"That's right," nodded Blaine. "Somebody set that signal of distress."

"How is it the captain and the mates and the passengers should be playing cards with the spectre of death about them?"

"Don't ask me, mate. The whole thing is a great mystery."

"When the Government looks into it maybe they'll find an explanation."

"All we can do is to report what we've found," said Blaine.

"In the meantime the brig is running ashore," said Jack. "We'd better change her course."

"Good idea, mate. I'll attend to that. You two stand by to swing the yards."

"We ought to get some sail off her. We can easily haul down the jibs and let the spanker drop," said Jack.

"Yes, we can do that, and we can take in some of her light sails."

Blaine said they'd change her course first, and he started aft toward the wheel.

The brig was now close in to the land, which she was bound to strike unless her head was put around some points and her yards swung so that her sails would draw on the new tack.

It was fortunate that the wind was so light.

If it held so, the derelict was sure to be picked up by some craft passing up or down the bay.

Blaine found the wheel lashed.

That seemed to indicate that the person who set the signal of distress had found himself obliged, for want of aid, to fix the wheel steady.

The question was where was the person who had done these things.

If he knew there was something wrong on board, why hadn't he warned the four in the cabin in time to save their lives?

Was it impossible for him to do it?

None of these questions could be answered.

Blaine lost no time considering them.

He released the wheel, then he called to the boys to cast off the braces on the starboard side holding the fore and main yards.

When this had been done they ran across and pulled the yards around to the angle the sailor wanted them.

The braces were then made fast again on both sides.

This movement brought the brig to for the moment, until the other higher yards were swung, when she gathered way again.

Blaine altered the rudder to meet the changed conditions and lashed it again.

One of the jibs was partially lowered, the other wholly taken in.

The spanker was let down by the run and left as it fell.

Blaine concluded not to bother with taking in any of the light sails, for the brig wouldn't make over a knot in that wind.

"We ought to leave a warning on board," said Jack, when they were ready to leave the derelict. "If we had a pot of red paint—"

"Maybe we can find some paint," said the sailor. "I'll look in the rooms off the passage. Stand ready to help me if that blamed gas gets hold of me again."

"I'd like to take a peep into the cabin," said Jack, who was curious to see the four corpses.

"I wouldn't do it, mate. You've had your dose," said Blaine.

"How long were you in there before you were attacked by dizziness?"

"Five minutes, I reckon."

"Then it isn't so strong there as it is in the fo'castle. I'll risk it."

Jack brushed by him, walked swiftly to the cabin door and looked in.

He saw the corpses sitting bolt upright at the table.

They held playing cards in their hands, and more cards were on the table, just as they had been played.

But Jack counted five dead men sitting there, and Blaine said there were only four.

Evidently he had made a mistake in his calculation.

Fearing the subtle poison, Jack shut the door and returned, feeling a bit dizzy.

He had to go to the bulkhead and lean over, he felt so sick.

In the meantime Blaine opened the door of the first room off the passage.

It was the pantry, and there flat on the floor lay a colored steward—stone dead.

He slammed the door to and opened the opposite one.

On the bed lay the body of the carpenter, fully dressed.

Apparently he was dead, too.

The other two doors were locked.

Blaine came staggering out almost overcome.

For fifteen minutes he was as sick as a dog.

It was decided to leave the brig at once, for no paint could be found.

The vessel, on her new tack, had clawed off shore, and appeared to be safe.

Blaine and the boys returned to the sloop, cast off and left the brig astern at a slow rate.

Sam was intensely curious to know what had detained them on the vessel so long, and what they had seen.

Dick volunteered to tell him while he started to get their belated breakfast.

Blaine stood at the wheel and Jack sat down on the weather side.

"Well, you saw the corpses, didn't you?" said the sailor.

"I did—five of them at the table."

"What's that—five! There were only four."

"You made a mistake in your counting. There were five."

"Get out. Don't I know what I saw? Wasn't I right close to 'em. There were four—the cap'n, two mates, I reckon, and another man."

"You can swear to that?" said Jack, in wonder.

"If it was my last word on earth."

"It's mighty funny, for I can take my Bible oath there were five. Remembering that you said about four, I was careful to count them and there were five."

Blaine stared fixedly at him.

"You didn't see straight. You came out dizzy."

"Yes, I saw straight. But what's the difference whether there were four or five? It's the mystery of the whole affair that gets me. I'd give something to know what it was that killed all hands and would have fetched us if we hadn't been able to get out of its influence."

"If it wasn't the sweating of the cargo I don't know what it was."

An argument followed as to the causes which induced certain kinds of cargo to sweat and throw off deadly fumes.

Blaine told of several cases he had heard of, but in each case nobody had lost their lives, and in only two were the officers and crew forced to abandon the vessel.

While they were discussing the matter Sam and Dick appeared with breakfast, and they sat down to it.

During the meal Dick was full of the strange incident, and hazarded all kinds of opinions as to the cause of it.

When they returned to the cockpit and Jack took up the job of steering, an easy one now that the sloop was just slipping along and no more, the strange brig, whose name they had read on the stern as the Singapore, was about a mile and a half away.

"She's a real coffin ship or moving cemetery," said Dick.

"Hello, there's a town of some kind ahead," said Jack.

The sighting of the town was regarded as most opportune.

They would put in there and report the incident of the Singapore.

So Jack headed direct for the little place, which, on closer approach, proved to be merely a good-sized village.

There was a lighthouse, and a large white two-story building on a rising piece of ground.

They could see telegraph poles stretching away from it across the country.

There was a small wharf at which a couple of schooners were loading.

The end of the wharf was not occupied and they ran in there and made fast.

Blaine and Jack went ashore to tell their story.

They found it was the village of Manlay, and was occupied by a Government telegraph station.

Jack recalled the newspaper story he and Dick had read in the library.

It was off this place the steamer Senegambia had anchored one night, and where the three desperate members of her crew had escaped from confinement between decks, and swam ashore in spite of the sharks that were said to abound in the delta.

Jack and the sailor went to the Government station, saw the officer in charge of the post, and told the story of the Singapore.

The officer was inclined to doubt their narrative, though a brig, answering to the Singapore, had been seen slowly passing up the bay that morning.

He questioned them closely, and finally accepted their statement with reservations.

After dismissing them he had the facts, in modified form, telegraphed to Calcutta, advising that a Government craft be sent out to look for her, giving the direction she was going in.

A fast steamer from the city would probably overhaul her some time during the night if weather conditions remained about what they were.

Having performed their duty Jack and Blaine returned to the Sally, cast off from the wharf and resumed their way across the delta of the Ganges.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE SWAMPS.

"This is where those men we read about escaped from the steamer, Dick," said Jack.

"Is that so?" replied Dick, with a look of interest. "They had a good swim of it, and the paper said the water is alive with sharks. I don't know how they ever did it."

"It was certainly something of a feat," returned Jack.

"What are you talking about?" asked the sailor.

Jack narrated the facts, as given in the paper, for his benefit.

"Where was the vessel anchored?" he asked.

"Somewhere off the village and not far from the shore."

"What became of the men?"

"I haven't heard if their fate has been reported."

"Where did they land?"

"On the shore opposite the village."

"There was no place for them to go except the beach or into the jungle. The place they landed on is a swampy island, and there's no path anywhere," said Blaine. "They couldn't have hit a worse place. There's nobody living hereabouts that I ever heard. Whether they went along the beach or not in the end they would have to take to the jungle you see stretching out yonder as far as you can make out. It's a forsaken region, and they either starved on their route, or were killed and eaten by wild animals, that are as thick as peas in a pod."

"You think they could not escape to some inland village?" said Jack.

"There isn't a village within fifty miles or more, and if you had any idea what trampin' through a jungle is, with nothin' to eat, you'd understand what the poor chaps were up against."

"I was told that cocoanut trees grew along the coast, and that there were lots of fish in the streams, as well as turtles," said Jack.

"That's true, matey, but a fellow adrift in this latitude is as likely to miss the cocoanut trees as to run across them. As to fish, they're not easy to catch without a hook and line, while turtles only come ashore at certain places, and then you've got to be mighty slick to catch one."

"But there's a chance that the men got through all right."

"If they were more lucky than most people they might in the end reach a village and so make their escape; but I wouldn't bet nothin' on it. They would have to swim at least a dozen narrow streams to get past these islands, and with no matches to start a fire at night to keep the animals at a distance, it strikes me that it'll be a miracle if they ever turn up alive."

They didn't reach the Ganges till long after dark, and as light and variable winds prevailed right along another twenty-

four hours went by before they came to the lower edge of the swamps they were bound for.

Twelve hours later they reached an island near the left bank which Blaine said was where the stream diverged in to the swamps.

He pointed it out on the chart.

Jack had expected to run against this island, for when he looked at the chart in the sailor's room at Nigger Sal's he was sure the small circle stood for an island.

They passed from the Ganges into a creek, bordered on both sides with tall reeds and jungle grass much higher than a man's head.

The creek was fairly wide where they went in, but it narrowed gradually to a strait of less than a dozen feet across in many places.

There being little wind, they went along but slowly.

All through the previous night, while on the river, they had heard the howl of wild beasts in the distance on both sides.

These cries were the only sounds that broke the deep silence of that solitude, and produced a weird and menacing effect on the party.

It seemed a foretaste of what they might encounter after they had pushed their way into the stamping grounds of the vicious beasts.

After entering the creek, the boys brought their magazine Remingtons out, so as to have them within easy reach in case of need, though the absence of sound under the sultry mid-day sun indicated that the denizens of the swampy islands were at rest in their lairs.

Still there was always the possibility of a chance encounter with a restive tiger, or an alert cobra.

Of course, as long as the creek was wide they had nothing to fear from any beast or reptile they saw, but when, after dinner, the creek narrowed considerably, the sailor advised them to keep a strict watch on both sides.

"I'm steering, and can't defend myself if a tiger should take a notion to leap at me out of the grass, where he can see us, though we may not see him. You remember I told you one of the Britishers on the launch was killed in that way. He was steerin' at the time, and was an easy victim. The tiger pounced upon him so suddenly that he was killed or stunned before he knew what had struck him. The other Britisher discharged a bullet from his revolver into the animal, but he took no notice of it, but takin' a good grip of his victim with his teeth, leaped ashore with him and disappeared into the grass. He made a meal of a part of him at his leisure, and the jackals, always on the alert for the leavin's, got the rest," said Blaine.

"We'd better not all sit here in the stern, then," said Jack, "for we'd make a pretty mark. Dick, you stay just inside the cabin door, with your rifle ready cocked. I'll go forward and stand in the galley. Sam ought to be through washing the dishes by this time."

"That's the ticket," said Blaine. "Hand me out the gun I fetched along."

"I think my revolver would answer better. You could grab it quicker in case of necessity," said Jack.

"Hand it over," said the sailor.

He laid it across his lap and then Jack went forward with his rifle.

Sam remained in the galley to keep him company, while Dick and the sailor conversed together.

A couple of hours passed away when Sam, who was looking out of the galley hatch, while Jack sat underneath in the shade, suddenly exclaimed:

"Look dar, boss. A tiger, for suah."

Jack was alert in a moment.

With his rifle at full cock he shoved his head out and looked where the black boy pointed.

For the first time in his life Jack was treated to the sight of a tiger, half exposed in the grass a dozen feet away, at large in his native haunt.

The animal had evidently been drinking.

With his head raised, his glaring eyes were fastened on the sloop.

"See him, Blaine," Jack called to the sailor.

"Sure I do."

"Shall I take a shot at him?"

"Yes, if you think you can plunk him in one of his eyes." But the boy got no chance to do it.

Just as he raised his Remington rifle to take aim the animal turned around and trotted off into the grass.

The last Jack saw of him was the whisk of his tail as it shot about the outer line of reeds.

As they proceeded the creek grew quite narrow between two swampy islands.

A large tree grew on one of them, and threw a heavy branch across their path, and it looked as if the top of the mast would strike it.

This was a serious matter, for they could not possibly turn around and retrace their course, so as to take the channel around one of the islands.

"Look at that arching branch across our course," Jack called to Blaine.

"I see it, my hearty. If we strike it one of us will have to shin up the mast with the hatchet or the saw and lop it off," returned the sailor.

"This is a fine place for a tiger to nab one of us," said Jack.

"It's rather early for them."

"But we saw one a short ways back."

"He was a stray one who came to the creek for a drink."

"What's that thing hanging down from the limb?"

"I don't know. Looks like a broken limb. You're closer to it than me."

As they drew nearer to the tree they saw that the mast would surely strike the limb.

They were going so slow that such a collision would hardly give a shock.

"Fo' de lands sake! We'se in it," cried Sam, in a tone of terror.

"What do you mean, Sam?"

"Doan' you' know what dat t'ing is dat's hangin' down from de limb?"

"It looks kind of queer to me," said Jack.

"It's a cobra asleep. Dat's his head and neck. De rest ob his body is lyin' along de branch. De moment de mast hits de limb he'll wake up, and den he'll come down and gobble us all up. Put de catch on, and den he won't be able to get at us."

"But he'll get at Bill and Dick unless they're warned. Hi, there, Blaine. That's a cobra hanging from that limb. The rest of him is lying along it. What'll we do?"

"Are you sure of that?" roared Blaine.

"Yes. He's asleep, I guess, but the mast is bound to hit the limb, and the contact will wake him up. Then something is likely to happen."

Dick heard what he said and came out of the cabin to take a look.

The sailor hastily picked up a rope and tied the wheel to the binnacle.

Then he told Dick to get his rifle.

"Get down under cover, Hunter, but you can take a shot at its head first. Wait a moment till I'm ready," said Blaine. Dick handed him his gun, which he cocked.

"Now, then, take careful aim and let her go," said the sailor.

The boat was close upon the cobra and the tree.

Jack took aim at the head, which hung still, a fine mark.

But just as he pulled the trigger, the snake woke up and raised his head.

The bullet missed him by a foot.

The cobra recognized an enemy, and began hissing and oscillating its neck.

This made it very difficult for Blaine to get a bead on it.

Finally he fired, and the ball grazed the snake's head.

The boat was about to pass under the limb, so Jack hastily slammed on the hatch cover.

Blaine seized Dick's Remington and fired again, the bullet cutting a furrow across the cobra's neck close to its head.

The mast hit the branch and quick as winking the snake was around it, gliding down so fast that the sailor had barely time to push Dick back into the cabin, jump in himself and slam the door to, when the cobra slid across the deck, and ran his head and neck into the cockpit.

CHAPTER IX.

REACHING THEIR DESTINATION.

The thumping of the cobra's folds on the deck, and its fierce hissing, could easily be heard by the party under cover.

The reptile was in full possession of the outside of the sloop, and it probably was unable to understand where its enemies had disappeared to.

Its head hung over the cabin door, swaying to and fro, and giving a disappointed hiss every few moments.

Dick fairly shivered in his boots as he listened to it.

Sam's eyes stuck out like saucers in the galley, and he was terribly uneasy lest the snake would knock the hatch cover off with a sweep of its tail.

After awhile the cobra quieted down, but it was on the watch.

"I'm going to take a peep," said Jack.

"Doan' do it, boss; doan' for de lub ob heaben," protested Sam. "Yo' doan' know whar his head am."

"It's aft, I'm sure, for we heard him hissing there up to a few minutes ago."

"But he may hab come for'ard since and am lyin' in wait fo' us to show ourse'fs. Dem cobras am mighty sly in deir ways. Yo' neber kin tell what deir up to."

Jack persisted in his purpose.

He raised the scuttle an inch and saw the tip end of the reptile's tail well aft.

He had expected to see a reptile fully twice that size, and the shortness of this one made it appear much less formidable.

"Take a look, Sam," he said, lifting the scuttle a foot.

"Whar am de snake?"

"Aft. Hanging over the cabin door."

Sam ventured to take a look.

He had heard during his residence in Calcutta that the cobra was easily killed by the blow of a common stick, or the stroke of a whip, but had never believed it.

Such, however, is the fact.

Its bite is extremely powerful, causing death in two hours or less.

They have the reputation of being sluggish creatures, but this one had proved itself mighty lively and aggressive.

"Hold up the scuttle, Sam. I'm to take a shot or two at it."

Sam protested that it would be safer to leave it alone.

"But Blaine and Dick are stuck in the cabin, and the boat is held up by the bough of the tree. The snake is liable to remain there indefinitely. I'm going to make him get."

He took aim and fired.

The cobra disappeared over into the cockpit, and made a great noise there.

Jack waited for it to reappear, but it didn't.

Presently he and Sam heard the whip-like report of a revolver from the cabin.

Then he saw Blaine appear and strike at the snake with a club.

That settled the cobra.

Then Dick came out of the cabin.

He and the sailor lifted the snake with the muzzles of the rifles and shoved it overboard, and it floated slowly down the stream.

Jack came out of the galley.

The sloop had drifted back some ten yards from the tree, but was gathering way again as the breeze struck the sails.

Getting the saw, Jack climbed up the mast and when the sloop came up with the limb again, he seized it and began sawing at it.

In a few minutes the branch parted at the cut and the boat passed on.

"We'd better get supper over with before dark, hadn't we?" said Jack, a couple of hours later.

"I think we had," nodded Blaine, "for the smell of the food it likely to attract any beast that's near by, and give us trouble."

So Sam was ordered to prepare the meal right away.

They ate it, and the dishes were cleaned up by the time the sun disappeared and darkness fell.

Jack decided to post himself again in the galley with Sam and keep watch with the scuttle half open.

Dick steered awhile, and while he was at it the infernal chorus of savage animals began with the howls of hungry hyenas.

Some of these animals came close to the boat as it crept along the narrow waterway, and Jack shot two of them.

Each time there was a commotion as the other hyenas sprang on their downed mate and tore him to pieces to satisfy their hunger.

Nothing in the tiger line turned up during the night as far as was noticed.

Sam kept watch while Jack slept, and so they took turn about till about two o'clock the creek widened out.

Then the anchor was dropped and all hands turned in.

The trip was not resumed until after breakfast, and there being a better breeze they proceeded faster, following a course as near northeast as they could go.

They didn't see a single animal that day, and when night closed in they were at another safe anchorage.

"We're getting on fine," said Dick. "I wonder how much further we have to go?"

"Not far. We ought to reach the wreck some time to-morrow," said the sailor.

They did not reach their destination next day, nor for three days after that.

When they awoke next morning a dead calm rested on the swamps, and they did not raise their anchor all day.

The heat was intense, though not more so than usual, but the absence of wind made their situation in the midst of the motionless stream almost intolerable.

They let the mainsail down and propped it up for an awning under which they lay off and sweated.

All night the calm prevailed and all the next day up to sundown, when a breeze sprang up, and they decided to go on in spite of the darkness.

About ten that night, while Jack was steering, with his rifle beside him, he saw a pair of baleful eyes staring out of the grass a few yards away.

He picked up his Remington and, aiming between them, let drive.

An unearthly screech echoed on the night air, and a dark object sprang into the air and came toward the boat.

It fell short and hit the water with a big splash, disappearing.

The sailor was aroused and came out of the cabin.

Jack told him what he had done.

"It was a tiger and you killed it."

"He's gone to the bottom of the stream. What an elegant rug his skin would have made, with the head attached. You can't buy one in New York under \$500."

"Maybe we'll get one for you on our way back. If we skinned a tiger now his hide would be useless by the time we got back to Calcutta."

There was a chorus of blood-curdling howls on the left bank and a dozen pair of eyes appeared through the darkness.

"Hyenas," said the sailor. "The tiger's blood drew them over."

"He couldn't have shed much, for he leaped almost the moment I fired."

"Those hyenas will smell a drop a mile away."

The sailor exaggerated, but there is no doubt that hyenas have a very keen scent.

Nothing more happened that night, during which they made some progress toward their goal.

The boys were afraid they might miss the wreck in the darkness, but the sailor told them that it was so close to the stream that they were sure to see it.

"Tom Smith told me that the bows stuck up clear of the reeds, though the bow-sprit is broken off. It lies on the right hand side," said Blaine.

"Yes, I know. I've been keeping a sharp lookout that way. The bright background of the sky is a great help to make out any object silhouetted against it."

Blaine turned in to finish his spell below, and Jack steered till midnight, when he called Dick to go on duty till four.

"Keep a good lookout for the wreck, for Blaine says we're close to it. Remember, it's on this side of the stream."

"If we're on the right stream."

"I guess we are. Let us hope so at any rate."

"This is such an awful wilderness that it seems to me we can easily go astray," said Dick.

"We're following the compass directions so closely that I feel sure we're all right."

"I hope we are. I'm just crazy to reach the wreck, take in the gold and get back to civilization."

"You don't wish to get back any more than I do. We've had a lucky trip of it so far. I hope nothing happens on our way back. To find a million in gold, and each of us get a third of it, seems too good to be true."

"It certainly does. I won't believe in such luck till I see the money bags in the hold."

"If the stream narrows much you should call Bill. You mustn't take any chances. If the Englishmen had proceeded as cautiously as we have, and had the same kind of a craft, they'd have carried off the gold and been alive to-day, in all likelihood," said Jack, as he entered the cabin.

Dick steered on, rather oppressed by his lonesomeness.

He wasn't sure but the cries of the wild animals at a distance was not preferable to the complete silence that otherwise would have held sway in the swamps.

It was close on to four when he saw something shining in the starlight above the grass.

He looked at it carefully, but could not make out what it was.

It appeared to be a hundred yards away, to the left.

He decided to call Blaine.

He left the wheel and aroused the sailor.

"I've sighted something off to the left. It may be the wreck and it may not. I want you to look at it," said Dick.

The sailor took his glass and stepped onto the deck.

He saw the object and leveled the glass at it.

It was not a night glass, but it helped his vision.

The object looked thick and was inclined at an angle of thirty degrees or so.

The starlight reflected spots of brightness on it.

"It must be the wreck," he muttered.

"What do you make it out to be?" asked Dick, intensely interested.

"Well, matey, I reckon it's the wreck of the Kohinoor. We'll come to anchor here. When the sun rises we'll know for sure if it's the wreck."

They went forward and let go the anchor.

Then they both turned in, closing the cabin door as a precaution.

CHAPTER X.

THE THREE MEN ON THE WRECK.

Bill Blaine was up first in the morning and was out on deck with his glass shortly after sunrise.

He turned the glass on the object which had attracted his and Dick's attention during the night and easily made out the bows of an old-time vessel rising beyond the encircling grass.

"It's the wreck, sure enough," he said to himself. "While the boys are asleep I'll go over and take a look at the treasure—the million in money—that's bagged in her hold."

He put the glass down on the deck and reached for a long pole lying against the low rail that ran along either side of the deck, his purpose being to push the sloop's stern over to the grass lined shore where he could step off.

In lifting the pole he stepped backward and his foot came upon the spyglass.

The round glass slipped under his weight and the sailor fell with a tremendous thump on the roof of the cabin, and fell so awkwardly that he sprained his right foot.

When he tried to get up he found he couldn't use his foot.

The noise of his fall aroused Jack, who came out to see what was the matter.

"Was it you who made all that noise, Blaine?" he asked.

"Yes. I stepped on that blamed spyglass, twisted my foot and fell. Now I'm down and out for my leg is badly sprained. Get a piece of cloth, wet it and tie it tight around my ankle or I'll soon have a foot as big as a beer barrel."

Jack hastened to do as the sailor requested and he soon had Blaine's injured foot bandaged tightly.

To make sure of keeping the swelling down the sailor got over to the side of the sloop and reached his leg down into the water, keeping it there.

He told Jack how the accident had happened.

"I was goin' to slew the stern around so I could walk over to the wreck and inspect it," he said.

"The wreck!" exclaimed Jack. "Have we reached it?"

"Yes, it's over yonder. You can see the bows easily from the deck with your naked eye, but you can see it plainer with the glass. There's the consarned thing lyin' against the port rail."

Jack picked up the telescope and leveled it at the object beyond the grass.

He saw what Blaine had seen, and his nerves tingled with excitement.

They had reached their destination and they would soon know if the missing was still in the hold of the old craft which had met her fate in the swamps forty years before.

Forty years!

That was a long time for a wreck to remain undiscovered, especially when she represented a treasure trove.

But after all when one considered the perils of those swamps, and the utter loneliness of them, it wasn't so surprising.

"Push the stern over yourself, Jack, and secure the sloop so she'll lie stern on to the shore," said Blaine. "When you've done that you can go and take a look at the money bags. The sight of them will give you an appetite for breakfast. We ought to be able to get them all aboard in a couple of hours and be off."

"I hope you'll be able to boss the job even if you can't lend a hand," said Jack.

"I reckon I'll be on the job as soon as I can stand on my game pin."

Jack pushed the stern over, but found she lacked a couple of yards of touching the grass, and as the grass grew out of the water he judged that it was doubtful business getting to the solid ground that way.

He acquainted Blaine with the difficulty, and it was decided to raise the anchor and run her bows in.

While they were talking Dick and Sam came out of the cabin, and the matter was postponed until after breakfast.

An hour later they sat down to the morning meal in excellent humor.

The sailor declared that his foot felt almost as good as ever.

"I'll give it another spell of rest and a soak in the creek while you chaps are looking the wreck over and figgering the easiest way to get the gold aboard," he said.

Breakfast over, Jack and Dick raised the anchor, hoisted the jib and worked the sloop bow on into the grass, with the help of the pole, till she hit the shore.

Then Jack leaped off with a mooring line and tied the craft to a convenient tree.

"I'm off for the wreck," he shouted to Dick. "Come on."

"Hold on, boss," said Sam to Dick. "I'll be with yo'. Here's a club to carry. I's got anudder one. We may need dem to stand off one of dem pesky snakes."

Dick waited and Jack reached the wreck before Dick and Sam started.

They saw him clamber up on the deck of the wreck, which was hardly more than four feet above the level of the swampy ground.

He paused a moment and looked up and down the old derrick, then he jumped down out of sight.

"He's in the hold," said Dick, as he and Sam pushed forward.

Then there came sounds to their ears from the inside of the old hut.

"Something's wrong," cried Dick. "He must have run against some wild animal down there. It's a good thing you thought of the clubs, Sam."

"Help! Help!" cried Jack, springing out of the hold of the wreck, followed by three hard looking fellows, one dressed in convict stripes, who tried to seize him.

Dick, waving his club, and attended by Sam, rushed to his aid.

The apparition of the three strangers had astonished them, but Jack's danger gave them no time to consider the matter.

"Hi, hi!" shouted Dick, "what are you chaps about?"

Jack eluded the grasp of the foremost man, leaped to the ground and ran toward his companions.

The three men did not pursue him further, but stood and looked at the three boys come together.

"They're not following you," said Dick when Jack came up. "Who in thunder are they?"

"I couldn't tell you," said Jack, turning about.

The three boys looked back at the men on the wreck while the men looked at them.

"Where did you fellers come from?" asked the stout man, in a menacing tone.

"What's that to you?" replied Jack.

"If you don't clear off we'll show you," roared the man, with an imprecation. "This here wreck belongs to us, and we won't have you around, do you hear? So get away from here blame quick or you'll regret it."

"I guess you won't have all to say about that wreck," replied Jack, defiantly. "You don't own it, and we came here on purpose to visit it. As you fellows are bigger than us we'll have to give in to you for the present, but we'll soon be back with a Gatling gun, and then we'll blow you over to the next island."

"Gatling gun be jiggered. If you come back here again we'll make mincemeat of you, and serve you to the jackals when they come around to-night," said the man.

"Say," said Dick, in a low tone, "I'll bet those are the three rascals who escaped from the steamer."

"Lord! Maybe they are. In that case we're up against a bad bunch."

"We've got arms and they haven't. They'll have to knuckle down to us or take the consequences."

"Why don't you go?" shouted the man.

He picked a club off the deck and started for the boys.

Jack and his companions concluded it was the part of wisdom to return to the sloop and confer with Blaine.

They hurried along and the ruffian followed in a deliberate way.

He was curious to learn how they had reached that island in the swamps.

By following them he believed he would be able to find out. The boys hastened back to the sloop.

They found Blaine aft with his hurt foot soaking in the creek.

Sam was told to remain at the bows and watch to see if the men followed.

Jack surprised the sailor with his account of the three fellows who were in possession of the wreck.

"Three of them, you say?" said Blaine, with a blank look.

"Yes."

"They claim the gold, I s'pose."

"Nothing was said about the treasure. They said the wreck belonged to them, and they ordered us off in a rough way."

"That's bad. Where is their vessel?"

"I don't believe they've got any."

"They must have. How else could they get here?"

Then Jack explained who he and Dick believed the men were.

At that Blaine looked relieved.

"Oh, if they're escaped convicts we'll give them a fight for the gold. Are they armed?"

"One of them had a club."

"What's a club against three rifles and a revolver? They'll have to get. We didn't take all the trouble and expense of comin' out here for that money to let them hold on to it. Besides, how could they carry it away without a boat?"

"The easiest way would be to make a deal with them," said Jack.

"Do you mean take them aboard with us and give them a share of the money? I guess not. If they're the rascals you say they are, they'd turn on us at the first chance they got, do us up, take charge of the sloop, and get off somewhere with the whole of the money. It wouldn't do to trust them under any circumstances."

"I guess you're right," admitted Jack.

"Of course I'm right. Did they follow you?"

"One of them, the biggest chap, followed us."

"To see where you were going, and what kind of craft brought you here. This here complication is rather awkward. There's liable to be blood spilled before it is settled."

"I don't see how they ever made their way here on foot from the shore opposite Manlay, without weapons to defend themselves, or food to eat. They must have caught fish and ate them raw, and secured some cocoanuts. I don't see where they could have run across any fresh water."

"Men who could go through what they seem to have done are sure hard cases to tackle."

"It must have taken them two weeks," said Dick. "With no matches to light a fire it's a miracle how they escaped the wild beasts."

At that moment Sam shouted that one of the men was looking at the bow of the sloop.

Blaine pulled his bandaged foot out of the water and went forward with the boys.

The man was still there with a bad look on his countenance.

"Well, my hearty, how did you and your friends come to this swamp island?" said the sailor.

"What's that to you?" asked the man, in a surly tone.

"It's nothin' to me if you don't want to tell. I shouldn't think you'd find this place a comfortable stampin' ground."

"It suits us. What brought you chaps here?"

"We came here to inspect that wreck."

"You can't inspect her while we're here, that is unless you're willin' to make a deal to take us off," said the rascal, a sudden thought occurring to his mind.

"As long as you came here without our help you ought to be able to go away in the same way."

"It happens we lost our boat."

"Oh, you had a boat, eh?"

"How d'ye s'pose we could have got here without one?"

"You might have swum the creeks and walked the rest of the way."

"And been ate up by the animals. Say, why do you want to look over the wreck?"

"Because we believe there's a lot of money in her hold."

"Who told you that?"

"A chap who was out here and got away with some of it."

"Are you runnin' that sloop?"

"I am."

"Maybe we kin make a dicker?"

"You want to be taken off this island?"

"Yes; but we want to be dropped wherever we say."

"Whereabouts?"

"We'll talk about that later."

"What kind of a dicker do you want to make?" asked Blaine, wishing to draw the man out.

"I'll admit that when we got here two days ago we found a lot of bags of gold in the hold of the wreck. As we found it we have the right to claim it. At any rate we intend holding on to it. You chaps won't be able to get a smell of it unless you're willin' to treat with us."

"That's so? Suppose we won't take you away, what good is the money to you? You can't carry it away with you without a good sized boat. And how are you goin' to live in this place?"

"Don't you worry about us. We've been through worse than this and I guess we can stand it. And it's none of your business whether we kin carry the money away with us or not. One thing is certain, you won't get it. We'll dump it into the creek first. If you're willin' to come to terms with us, after I talk the matter over with my pals, we can all get an even whack at the money. There's four of you and three of us. There's ten bags of brass. Each of us will take a bag, and we'll divide the rest after countin' it. What do you say?"

"We don't care to dicker on them terms. There's one bag broken open, isn't there?"

"Yes."

"We'll give you chaps that, and provide you with bags to carry it in, and provisions to last you on your journey to the Ganges, which is about thirty miles away as the crow flies, due sou'-west."

"We don't intend to walk if we kin help it."

"Well, you won't go on this sloop, for we hain't got any accommodations for you. We're full up now."

"That's your answer, is it?" said the man.

"Yes, you can take it back to your friends."

"If you think you kin get at that money in spite of us just try it. We're prepared to fight to keep it. I warn you right now if you come nigh that wreck we'll do you up. When you learn what you're up against maybe you'll change your mind. That's all I've got to say now."

The speaker turned on his heel and walked away.

CHAPTER XI.

MAKING TERMS.

"Kind of a tough proposition we've got to crack. What do you think, mateys?"

"That's right," nodded Jack. "I don't feel like going ashore with our rifles and shooting them down. Their blood would be on our hands, and I'd always remember it. The gold would feel to me as if it was cursed, and I'd take no pleasure in it."

"I couldn't shoot a man except in self-defence," said Dick. Sam said nothing.

Blaine smoked away meditatively.

"That chap expects us to give in to get a share of the gold," said Jack.

"It won't do to give in. Those fellows would cut our throats or knock us on the head as quick as winking at the first chance. All he was aimin' at was to get aboard the sloop with his pals. He don't intend to give us a square deal. If they're escaped prisoners they'll want that fact kept quiet so they can get out of the country. The easiest way to keep it quiet, and at the same time hold on to all the money themselves, would be to get rid of us. Dead men tell no tales. With the sloop to carry them they'd sail across the bay, and then work along the coast till they reached some place where they felt it would be safe to leave her and take to the railroad with the gold. I could read the fellow's purpose in his eye."

"If we hang on here, out of their reach, they'll have to leave or starve," said Jack.

"In that case they sink the money so as to disappoint us."

"We must keep watch on them and see that they don't do that."

"The moment we interfered there'd be a fight, and blood would be shed. If that has got to come there's no use waitin', but bring matters to a focus at once."

The boys, however, were averse to a scrap with the escaped prisoners, whose identity they now felt certain of, and so matters were allowed to hang fire.

Blaine's foot felt so much improved that he took off the bandage and put on his shoe.

Then he felt fit for whatever might be in the wind.

They kept a sharp watch out lest the men should try to catch them off their guard.

Sam was kept forward with the revolver, and instructed to warn the rascals off if they made an attempt to board the sloop.

Nothing was heard from the enemy until after Sam was relieved from his post by Dick so that he could get dinner.

The smell of frying bacon must have reached the noses of the rascals, for the three came close to the sloop and Dick asked them what they wanted.

"We'd like to buy a mess of that bacon and some bread. We'll pay you £200 in gold for it," said the big man, looking like a famished hyena.

"Nothing doing," replied Dick. "If you agree to go off on the terms made to you I dare say we'll cook you the bacon, and give you all you can eat besides."

The big fellow turned to his companions and talked with them in low tones.

What he said Dick couldn't hear.

Blaine, hearing the conversation, looked over the side and saw the men.

He called Jack out of the cabin, grabbed his rifle and went forward to support Dick if necessary.

The three fugitives were ravenous with hunger, having had nothing but one cocoanut between them that morning, and the smell of the bacon, done in Sam's most artistic style, had them nearly crazy for some of it.

Dick told the sailor what the men wanted, and the reply he had made them.

"You'd better consent to our terms," said Blaine. "You shall each have a bag to carry off a third of the opened treasure bag in the hold, and another bag to fill with food. We'll give you a box of matches and a piece of oiled silk to keep it dry when you swim the streams. You'll have \$20,000 apiece and a fair chance of getting out of the swamps—a good deal better one than you had getting here from where you came ashore."

"What do you know about us?" snarled the man at his words.

"We don't know anything, but we guess you're the three fellows who swam ashore from the steamer Senegambia while she was anchored off Manlay a while ago."

The fellow gave the sailor a murderous look, and they probably would have rushed the sloop but for the rifle in Blaine's hands and the revolver in Dick's.

"Will you sell us the grub for the £200?" he said.

"No. You know the only terms on which we'll treat with you and I take it they are good ones. What would you fellows do with a whole bag of gold apiece anyway? You'd give yourselves away at the first civilized town you struck and you'd be arrested on suspicion of having robbed somebody. Now \$20,000 apiece will give you chaps a riproarin' time for a long while to come if you don't throw the money away."

The men talked together again.

Make it £10,000 apiece, a layout of that bacon and all the bread we kin eat, provisions to carry us to Hoogly River—"

"The Hoogly River is a hundred and fifty miles from here."

"What of it? The swamps don't reach all the way there."

"No. You'd strike native farms and villages long before you got there. But you couldn't carry \$50,000 in gold. You'd find it too heavy."

"Never mind what we couldn't carry. We want to take it."

"All right. We'll agree to the £10,000, and all the food you can carry with it."

"And the bacon right away?" said the man, eagerly, while his companions worked their mouths in a famished way.

"You can have it in an hour, after we've eaten our dinner. The cook will make a fresh mess for you, with fried potatoes, bread and butter, and a whole pie."

"We agree. You can have the blame money in the wreck except our share. I'd give a bag of it now for a square meal."

"Go away, then, and come back when we yell for you," said Blaine.

"Can't you give us some bread now to chew on? We're famished."

"Yes, we'll do that."

A small loaf that Sam had baked the day before was tossed to them.

It had been sliced in thirds almost through for their convenience.

They broke the sections off and began devouring it ravishingly as they went away.

"Hunger is the greatest conquerer in the world," laughed Dick.

"Yes, it will tame a wild animal for the time being."

"Do you think they'll stand by their bargain after they get filled up?" said Jack.

"I don't know. I'm not goin' to take any chances with them. They might make a bluff of goin' away, hang around the island till dark, and then, figuring we're off our guard, make an attempt to capture the sloop. They're wicked enough for anythin', to judge by their looks."

"I think we'd better pole the sloop back into the middle of the creek when it begins to get dark. That will cut us off from them if they have any intention of returning and surprising us," said Jack.

"My idea is to do better. We must try to get the nine bags aboard before dark and set sail on our way back."

"That's a good idea. But we'll have to work quick, and keep a sharp watch, both on the sloop and on ourselves," said Jack.

"Sam will watch the sloop, or maybe one of you lads had better do it, keeping your rifle cocked. The rest of us will break out the gold, carrying a bag full each. Later we'll sew the bags up. I bought more bags than we'll need, that's why we can afford to give those chaps two each—one for their gold and the other to carry grub in," said the sailor.

Here Sam announced dinner, and leaving the black boy on watch they entered the cabin and ate it.

After Sam had had his own dinner he set to work to make a meal for the three fugitives from justice.

While he was thus engaged Jack left the sloop and went to the inner edge of the grass to see where the men were.

They were seated in the shade of a tree near the wreck talking.

Jack would have given something to have heard what they were saying.

Then an idea struck him.

When the men were called to their meal he would secret himself in the wreck and listen to what they had to say after their hunger had been satisfied.

He returned on board and laid his plan before Blaine.

The sailor approved of it, but warned him to be cautious.

"I'll carry the revolver with me, and should you hear a shot you'll know I'm in trouble, and you can come to my aid," said Jack.

The matter being settled, he went ashore again, and worked around through the tall grass toward the stern of the wreck.

This part of the old craft was buried out of sight in the mud and sand.

He managed so well that the three men did not suspect his presence on shore.

He waited till Blaine shouted to the men to come and get their dinner.

They needed no second bidding, but started for the bow of the sloop as fast as they could walk.

The moment they disappeared into the line of grass, Jack ran aboard the hulk and sprang down into the hold.

There he saw ten bags of treasure, each bearing the seal of the Rajah's treasure at their closed mouths, though it would have been hard to have deciphered the inscription at that time.

One of the bags had a gaping slit in it—the one that the sailor Tom Smith helped himself to a bucketful of the gold out of.

Jack thrust in his hand and pulled out a lot of East Indian gold pieces, such as was current fifty years previous.

They were about the size and weight of English sovereigns.

He dropped them in his pocket and then looked around for a place to conceal himself.

There were several ship's chests, one of which had been broken into, and which contained East Indian military attire of the period when the Kohinoor was in commission.

A big barrel lay jammed against one of the chests, and Jack got behind that.

He found he had for companionship part of a skeleton.

The gruesome object did not bother him any, though at first it had given him a start.

Here he waited and sweltered in the musty hold for awhile and then he heard the three rascals returning.

They came down into the hold with their dinners done up in paper.

They squatted down and began devouring it like very hungry men.

They ate steadily until they cleaned up every morsel, including the pie, which they topped off with.

Then they lay back, pulled pipes out of their pockets and began to smoke with the tobacco Blaine had given them.

"I feel as fit as a fiddle, blime me, if I don't," said the fellow in the striped suit.

"I'm as full as a goat," remarked the big man.

"So am I," said the third, "but not as full as I'd like to be. I'd give a handful of them shiners for a good drink of rum now."

"Maybe we kin bone some of the sailors afore we leave," said the first speaker.

"But are we goin' to leave, me covies?" said the convict.

"We agreed to," said the big man.

"That was when we were empty an' I could 'ear me innards rattle. I thought it was understood what we were goin' to do. Fill our bags with some of the gold, get the provisions for our trip, and then make a start for the island ahead. Then we were to lie low, y'know, till well along in the night. Then we was to sneak back, board the bloomin' sloop, and knock them chaps on the 'ead. After that we were to snooze till mornin', then load the bags aboard of her, and sail away. Ain't that the time of day, my covies?"

The others agreed that that was the programme, and they discussed it in full, and Jack, in his hiding place, found out just what they intended to do.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ATTEMPTED SURPRISE.

When all had been settled to their satisfaction, one of them brought forward the three bags Blaine had given them to put their agreed share of the money in, and they proceeded to fill them from the slitted bag.

There was the equivalent of \$70,000 in the big bag, and when they had divided the money in three parts they found their shares mighty heavy to carry.

They had asked for £10,000 each, and the bags contained less than half as much.

At that there was more than they could conveniently carry.

After filling their bags, and blaming their weight, they sat down and had another smoke.

They talked over their plans after they got hold of the sloop.

They said they would cross the bay and sail down the eastern coast of the Indian peninsular to Madras.

There they proposed to head up their gold in small kegs labeled rum, and ship it to England by the first steamer en route, taking passage themselves in the vessel.

Having reached this satisfactory conclusion, they got up, took the bags and left the hulk to go after their bags of provisions, and make the pretence of a start.

"I made no mistake in playing spy on those scoundrels," said Jack, after they had disappeared. "Now we are wise to their intentions, and when they try to work their little game I fancy we'll give them the surprise of their lives."

He remained awhile in the hold and then took a peer over the broken bulwark.

The three rascals had been to the sloop, got their bags of grub and were walking away toward the point where the creek narrowed around the island, and was fordable, though four feet deep.

Blaine and Dick followed them at a distance with their rifles to see that they really quitted the island.

When the sailor and Dick returned after seeing the enemy cross over to the next island and vanish into the grass, Jack joined them.

"Learn anythin'?" asked Blaine.

"Did I? I should say I did. I hid in the hold where they came down to eat, and they have arranged to do exactly as we suspected they might."

Jack told his story from first to last, and the sailor swore at the intended treachery of the men they had helped.

Dick was anxious to see the interior of the hold and the bags of gold, so the three went to the wreck and boarded her.

Jack remained on deck on the lookout while Blaine and Dick went down.

It had already been decided to open the sealed bags and transfer their contents to the small bags Blaine had provided and which would hold about \$25,000 each.

Dick remained on the hulk while Jack and the sailor returned to the sloop for the bags.

They found Sam on guard with a rifle on the bows, where he had been posted.

It did not take long for Blaine and Jack to get the bags and return to the wreck.

One of the bags was cut open and half its contents transferred to two of the small ones.

Dick and Jack made the first trip back to the sloop, and found the weight of the bags as much as they cared to carry a short distance.

Two bags were stored in the cabin and Dick and Sam went to the bulk, Jack taking a rest.

When they arrived Blaine had filled two more bags, and was filling a third.

He and Sam made the trip this time, while Dick undertook the job of filling the bags.

After the last trip Jack and Dick went back to look the wreck over for anything else of value.

They opened all the chests, and selected several of the garments, made out of rich material, which they found in good condition.

They packed a small chest half full of the goods, together with an ornamental curved sword, and several other curious articles they turned up, and took it with them to the sloop.

It was close on to sundown and there was nothing more to detain them at the swamp island.

Unfortunately it had dropped to a dead calm which practically tied the sloop to the spot.

"We can't get away after all," said Jack. "How unfortunate!"

"We'll unmoor anyway and pole the sloop into the center of the creek with her nose pointed the way she's bound," said Blaine.

The mooring line was let go and the boys poled the little craft into the middle of the narrow stream.

While they were doing it Sam cooked supper, and by the time they sat down to it darkness had fallen.

"Can't we pole the sloop down the stream a little way?" suggested Jack after supper.

"Yes, we can do that," said Blaine, "but it will be something of a job."

"Dick and I will tackle the job and see what progress we can make."

The boys each took a pole and started it.

They found it was not so easy as working the bows or the stern around toward the shore as they had done before.

The bottom was soft and they couldn't get a good grip on it.

They labored for an hour and the result was not very encouraging.

Finally they gave it up, and laid out their plans for defence against the expected attack.

They decided not to do any sleeping that night.

The defenders felt that with their magazine guns they had little to fear from the three men, but they hated to have to shoot the fellows.

"We must let them see that we are on the alert, and warn them off," said Jack. "They know we are armed and that they can do nothing with us as long as they have failed to take us by surprise."

Blaine nodded as he puffed his pipe.

So the night advanced.

About eleven, Sam got down into the galley to watch from there.

Jack and Dick lay flat on the deck on either side of the boom, with their rifles beside them, while the sailor sat on a stool just inside the cabin door.

All around the howl of the wild animals echoed on the calm night air.

Another hour passed and nothing happened.

The warmth of the night, and the inaction, made the boys sleepy.

Sam had dozed off at his post.

The sailor, however, was as alert as at any time.

Midnight passed and Blaine came on deck to see how the watchers were.

He found the boys awake, but not feeling very bright.

He told them the time and warned them to brighten up as the enemy might be looked for at any time now.

Sam was fast asleep and Blaine shook him into wakefulness.

Then he returned to his post.

Fifteen minute later Jack and the sailor both saw the grass move and two men wade out into sight and look toward the sloop.

The third chap joined them and they stood talking together.

Then the fellow in the striped suit started to swim out to the vessel.

The others remained where they were watching him.

"One of them is swimming toward us. See him, Dick?" said Jack.

"I see his head, and the movement of his feet," replied Dick.

"He's making for the stern, which is nearest to him. Blaine will attend to him," said Jack.

The man came on and reached the sloop.

He reached up and seized the rail and was in the act of putting his leg over when the sailor appeared from the cabin and shoved the muzzle of his rifle against his head.

"Git, or I'll blow your head off," he said.

The convict was so startled that he lost his grip and fell back in the water with a splash.

He went under and when he came up Blaine said:

"We're on to you chaps, and the bunch of us are waitin' ready to give you all a warm reception. Sheer off now, and consider yourself lucky that you haven't got a bullet into you. The next attempt you fellows make to board us will be received with lead and not words. Now get a move on, and be quick about it."

The convict had already got a move on and was swimming back to his companions as fast as he could go.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

Blaine and the boys watched the rascal join his friends and stand talking to them.

The whole bunch flung imprecations and threats at those in the sloop and then disappeared into the grass.

"I hope that's the end of them," said Jack.

"What more can they do?" said Dick. "They haven't even a knife to attack us with."

The general opinion was that they had seen the last of the scoundrels.

The three boys turned in and the sailor kept watch for the rest of the night.

The enemy did not reappear.

With the rising of the sun a slight breeze began blowing across the swamps, and the party got their sails up to make the most of it.

It was not strong enough to more than drift them along at the rate of perhaps a mile in an hour.

When they sat down to dinner at noon the breeze had died out altogether, leaving them once more becalmed near the junction of two streams.

The sailor and the two boys were in great good humor over the success of their expedition.

Sam's heart had also been made glad by the promise of a small share of the treasure.

While it is true they had not secured the whole million, they figured they would divide the sum of \$900,000 between the three of them.

Three hundred thousand was a big lot of money for each of the boys to start life with.

Its possession would gloss over their crazy act of running away from school and shipping as common sailors, and win their parents' forgiveness.

As for the sailor he knew in heart that he never would be able to spend half of his share during the rest of his natural life by rational endeavors.

However, he did not worry about what he might leave after him when the inexorable summons of Death called him away.

As no one could carry anything out of the world, no matter how rich he might be, the sailor would be on even terms with the world when his final accounts were balanced.

"As the money is in old fashioned native coins how are we going to exchange so much of it for English gold?" said Jack.

"By the way. We'll be made to explain how we came by it," said Dick. "When the Rajah's successor hears that the money is the missing million shipped by his predecessor he is quite liable to put in a claim for it with the English authorities. British law might sustain his claim, and award us only a comparatively small reward."

"I'm figured on that, my hearty," said Blaine, "and I'm goin' to provide against it. No one knows the object of our cruise. You chaps gave out aboard your ship that you were bound on a pleasure trip. We'll sew up the bags after breakfast. When we arrive at Calcutta I'll get a lot of kegs and we'll head the money up in them. Then we'll ship it aboard your craft as freight consigned to one of your dads, and you

fellows will return in the vessel just as if nothing had happened to make you rich. I'll follow by steamer via England, and will reach New York way ahead of your hooker. All I'll have to do will be to wait till you show up."

"But Sam is likely to give the news away in Calcutta," said Jack.

"I'll keep him under my eye, and warn him that if he lets out a word he'll lose his share of the gold. That will keep him mum. When I leave for the States, I'll take him with me. We'll sell the gold to the United States to be made over into American money, and we'll get its value in metal, and we won't lose much by it."

"That's a first class way of getting rid of it, and preventing any complications," said Dick.

"I hope this calm won't last," said Jack. "I'm in a hurry to get back. The cap'n might have compromised the trouble by paying the coolies their price. In that case it would take less than a week to finish loading the ship."

"If we were not on hand when the ship was ready to sail the skipper wouldn't wait for us, I'll bet," said Dick.

"What do you care?" said Blaine. "We'd all go back to the States by steamer then, and you'd get there so much the quicker."

The calm held, however, all the afternoon, and all through the night, during which they kept a regular ship watch, though there did not seem once chance in a thousand that they'd hear anything more from the three rascals, whom they had left about five miles back.

Next day the dead calm continued.

"Maybe the breeze will spring up at sunset," said Blaine, encouragingly.

It didn't, and so they were in for another hot night.

The boys found it a difficult matter to remain awake under the circumstances during their four-hour spell of watching.

The heat, and the solitude produced a feeling of lassitude that overcame them, and Jack was falling asleep into a doze when he recollected that it was close to midnight and time to call Dick to take his place.

Two o'clock came and a thin crescent moon rose in the starlit sky.

Dick had been on duty hours, but not on watch all that time.

He had been sound asleep with his head on his arm for a full hour.

As far as any good he was doing by being up he might as well have been a wooden Indian.

And it was a time when he should have been awake to look out for his own interests and those of his companions on board, for down the creek was gliding a rowboat, in which sat three men, one of whom was doing the rowing in a leisurely way.

The reader will easily guess who they were, though he may be surprised to find the rascals in possession of a boat.

The fact was they found the craft abandoned in a small inlet, its owner, a native who had come into the swamps for some purpose, having fallen a victim to the bite of a cobra which he had accidentally stepped on in the grass.

As soon as they came in possession of the boat, which was a piece of great luck to them, for they had about decided to cast away half their gold as being too heavy to carry, they decided to follow the sloop and see if they could not succeed in taking her by surprise before she reached the Ganges.

They knew that the gold was aboard of her, for they had examined the wreck and found it gone.

They argued that the further she got away from the island of the hulk the less watchful her occupants were likely to be.

"We'll catch the bloomin' chaps asleep this time," said the convict, "and we'll put them fast asleep for good."

"Right you are, my buck," said the big man. "Let me get my fingers around the sailor's neck once and I'll squeeze the breath out of him in a jiffy."

"This here calm'll help us catch up with him," said the third man. "They couldn't have gone more than five or six miles unless the tide has carried them further. At the most we won't have to row more'n ten miles."

During the day they lay at one of the islands and went to sleep.

When darkness fell they resumed their way, and it wasn't long before they saw the sloop lying motionless ahead.

"There she is, me covies," said the convict. "We must lie low for awhile. It's too early for us to get any closer to her."

The others agreed that it was, so they pulled into the grass and lay there for a number of hours.

When they finally decided that it was safe to proceed they

started to creep down in the shadow, like a tiger sneaking on its prey.

And the time seemed propitious for the success of their unholy enterprise, for every soul was asleep aboard the sloop at that moment.

No one likes to have bad dreams, but sometimes they prove useful.

Jack arose suddenly from one, bathed in perspiration.

He had seen in his sleep the three scoundrels creeping down upon himself and his companions, whom he pictured asleep on the deck of the treasure hulk.

"Lord, what a dream that was!" he exclaimed. "The fellows seemed to have us dead to rights! I'm glad it was only a dream, and that there is little chance of those chaps coming at us again. I wonder what time it is, and how Dick is getting on. That heat might have put him to sleep. I'll take a look at him."

He got out of his bunk and went to the cabin door, which was open.

He stared aghast at the sight he saw.

A boat had come up under the stern and three men were in her, one in the act of stepping aboard within two feet of the sleeping Dick.

Jack recovered in a moment and realized that the sloop was almost in the hands of the three scoundrels.

He seized his revolver, and stepped back to the door.

The convict was in the cockpit and was in the act of seizing Dick by the throat.

Jack pulled the trigger.

There was a flash, a sharp report, and a terrible yell from the convict, who fell back against the side of the sloop.

The shot awoke Dick and Blaine.

The latter rushed to Jack's side and looked out.

"The rascals are upon us, and I've shot one of them as he was reaching for Dick, who was asleep," said Jack.

Blaine uttered an imprecation and rushed for his rifle.

"Off with you," cried Jack, as the big man, paused with one foot over the sloop's side.

Blaine shoved his rifle at the fellow.

"Git!" he said, "or I'll fill you full of lead."

Dick picked up his Remington, which had fallen to the floor of the cockpit, and covered the other with it.

"Make them take the fellow I wounded with them. We don't want him aboard."

As the disappointed ruffians were giving up the fight Blaine picked the convict up in his arms and threw him into the boat.

"Be off with you, and remember you won't catch us nappin' again, not if I have to watch myself every night," roared the sailor.

The two scoundrels rowed away with their groaning companion, and they fung back imprecations on the heads of the people who had defeated their purpose just as it was about to prove successful.

Dick was ashamed that he had been asleep, and thus had endangered the lives of all on board, but the others did not find any fault with him openly.

All remained awake the rest of the night.

A breeze sprang up in the morning and twenty-four hours later they reached the Ganges and started toward the delta.

It took them four days more to reach Calcutta, and they found that the Morning Glory had completed her loading and sailed the afternoon before.

That left them no alternative about taking the next steamer.

The money was put into kegs, labeled "Nails," and shipped to England on the steamer they took themselves.

The kegs were reshipped to New York by an Atlantic liner, in which they also took passage, and a week later they landed in the United States.

The two boys were received with open arms by their families, and their escapade forgiven.

The East Indian gold was sold to the Sub-treasury for \$910,000.

Each took \$300,000, and Sam was given the \$10,000.

And so the party who went after the missing million were now happy in the possession of the treasure of the wreck.

Next week's issue will contain "A BOY FROM THE STREETS; OR, THE OLD BROKER'S PROTEGE." A story of Wall street.

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Granite headstones have just been placed on the graves of three horses on Robert F. Collier's farm and county estate at Wickatunk. The headstones are as costly as many which designate the graves of human beings. The date of the birth of the horse, the name of the animal's sire and dam and the date of death are inscribed on each. The horses are Dunsandel, Lakewood and Good Boy. They were used in fox hunts by Mr. Collier and were his favorite horses.

The bravery of John Bignam, an elevator boy, recently saved many persons from probable injury during a fire on the water front of Boston. Bignam ran his car up and down a five-story building at 247 Atlantic avenue while several tons of shellac were burning fiercely on the third floor. Sixty persons were taken down through smoke and flames from the fourth and fifth stories. The fire destroyed the stock of Whittemore, Wright & Co., incorporated, wax and shellac dealers. The loss was \$30,000.

Two small boys and a cow came near disrupting classes at St. Aloysius School, Prospect and Perry avenues, Kansas City, recently. Jack Tracy and Charley Speck, eleven and twelve years old, recently were sent home from the school. Idleness spurred fertile imaginations to plan a way to worry the boys' former teachers. "Old Molly," a brindle cow, was led to the school grounds. One lad led her about by the ear as the other proudly rode on her back. The animal seemed to enter into the fun, as she soon learned to walk back and forth by the school with both boys astride. Teachers tried without avail to stifle giggles and laughter by their pupils. Studying was mere form until the riders tired of the sport. As the boys already had been dismissed from the school, no punishment could be administered.

In his annual report Postmaster-General Hitchcock, after calling attention to the fact that the postal savings system now has 12,812 depositories, about 800,000 depositors and about \$28,000,000 in deposits, says: "On the basis of the present monthly net increase of deposits it is estimated that the gross income of the postal savings system for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1913, will amount to \$700,000, and the interest payable to depositors to \$300,000. The cost of supplies and equipment and the salaries of clerks at the central office during this period will aggregate about \$425,000, and to this amount should be added approximately \$275,000, representing compensation for time of post office clerks. Thus it will be seen that the estimated income of the system for the fiscal year will meet the amount of interest payable as well as the total expenses of the central office, but will not be large enough to cover also the cost of the clerical work in post offices. It is expected that when the deposits have increased to \$50,000,000, which, at the present rate, they will soon do, the system will be self-sustaining."

The distribution of the new "buffalo nickels" from the office of the United States Sub-Treasury at the corner of Wall and Nassau streets, New York, March 1, started a rush of messenger boys and street fakers, who were soon selling the new coins for as high as 15 and 20 cents apiece. These high quotations did not last long, however, and shortly after the noon hour the prices had subsided to what is called in the Wall Street vernacular, the normal, or 5 cents for each of the new nickels. Though the government mint at Philadelphia had stamped out about 4,000,000 of the new coins, the consignment that reached New York in two big kegs contained only \$1,000 worth, or 200,000 individual nickels. The demand became so heavy that Cashier E. W. Hale had to issue an order not to issue more than \$5 worth to each person in line and not less than 25 cents worth. The line dwindled down after that, and it is not expected that the demand will be nearly as heavy as it was for the Lincoln pennies when they were first issued on the Lincoln centennial in 1909. At that, \$25,000 worth of new pennies was sent to New York and the "run" lasted six days. The new coin has a large Indian head on one side and a bas relief of a bull buffalo on the other. The general impression of the coin is that it resembles the ancient coins of the Greeks more than the modern American "small change," with this difference, that the edges are raised so that the nickel will "stack" readily.

A find of much historical interest was made on Roanoke Island, N. C., a few days ago, when two young boys named Meekins found a dozen bottles of brandy which are at least fifty years old. The boys were walking around the shore line on the north end of the island when they saw some bottles sticking up out of the water. They investigated and found that there were a dozen of them arranged in three rows. The bottoms of the bottles were securely fastened in the clay of the shore line. When removed they were found to be in perfect condition and securely corked, the corks having rotted away and the mouths of the bottles having been filled with sand which had been cemented over. The boys sampled a bottle and found its contents to be very palatable, so much so that they drank too much and it went to their heads. They summoned their father, who recognized at once the value of the discovery. The brandy was found about fifty yards north of Huger's fort, and it is believed that it was buried in the earth by the Yankee soldiers when they occupied this fort. It has remained there all these years until the winds and tides ate away the land from around it and laid it bare. The bottles had not been removed from their first resting place, as underneath the bottles was found a piece of rotten plank, which evidently was a part of the bottom of the case. Some believe that this case of brandy is of very great age, having been buried here by the colonists of John White's colony, as the find was made in the neighborhood of the site of Raleigh's old fort.

THE BOY DIVERS

OR,

THE MYSTERY OF THE SUNKEN SHIP

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER X (continued)

Onslow had no more to say to the prisoners just then, and so he withdrew from the hold, accompanied by Captain Hawk and the others.

"The arch-villain! He actually means we shall employ ourselves as divers, to place the sunken treasure in his hands!" cried Dick, when the door had been closed and secured behind their foes.

"Boys, it must be Onslow is certain the sailor from the lost vessel will pilot him to the sunken ship, but I've my doubts about that. I wish I could have a secret confab with the sailor. At all events, we have got to risk our lives in an attempt to escape from this floating prison," replied old Dan.

"If we could only get out of this place and reach the deck undetected, we might possibly get off in one of the ship's boats under cover of the darkness," speculated Dick.

"That is what we must undertake to do. But silence! The door is about to open again," admonished old Dan.

A seaman entered, bearing food and water.

He placed both on a bench, and gruffly saying he would return for the dishes presently, withdrew.

Mark raised one of the dishes, as he thought he saw something protruding from beneath it.

The succeeding moment the lad held up a folded slip of paper.

"Look here. A note, and written by the man from the lost treasure ship!" cried Mark, excitedly, as he unfolded the paper and ran his eyes over its contents.

It was as he said, and he read the note aloud as follows:

"I am working to foil Onslow, and mean to help you. The man who brings you food can be trusted. He was a shipmate of mine in other days when under another name I knew Onslow well. Expect to see me some time to-night.

"THE SHIPWRECKED SAILOR."

"Bravo!" cried Dick, with hopeful enthusiasm. "We could not have looked for such good luck as this!"

"That's so. The shipwrecked sailor must be an honest fellow, and it's a most fortunate thing he has a friend among the crew of the schooner," assented old Dan.

Under the influence of new hopes the spirits of the captives rose, and they made a hearty meal of the food placed before them.

When the man who had brought it came to remove the dishes, he saw the note was gone. Shooting a glance of significant intelligence at the prisoners, he said:

"He'll surely be here along about midnight. I take my trick at the helm, then."

The seaman waited for no reply, but withdrew at once.

As he reached the deck he met Drake, and the two exchanged whispers.

But just then the lookout shouted:

"Sail ho!"

Captain Hawk sprang forward, glass in hand, and there was an anxious expression on his dark countenance.

CHAPTER XI.

DOOMED TO WALK THE PLANK.

Onslow was on the quarter deck, and he hastened to join Captain Hawk, beside the rail. The latter swept the tranquil sea with his glass, while he shouted to the lookout in the cross trees:

"Where away is the sail?"

"South by sou-west, sir!"

Pointing the glass in the direction stated by the lookout, Captain Hawk discerned the outlines of a sail, as its tall, dark masts were raising above the distant sea-line.

"What do you make her out to be?" inquired Onslow, as the glass at the eye of the other became fixed in its direction, and he looked long and earnestly.

"She's a cruiser!"

"Ha! are you sure?"

"Yes. But take the glass."

"Thanks."

Onslow inspected the distant sail through the marine telescope.

"You are right, she is a cruiser. I begin to see her black bows rising into view, and I can note the lighter painted outlines of her port-holes," he said in a moment or so.

"The man-of-war is cruising in search of us."

"Then you think it is the same vessel which you have told me of?"

"Yes, sir. We had a close call for capture by that same cruiser on the run from Havana. Hand me the glass again, please."

Onslow did so, and again inspecting the cruiser, Hawk went on:

"No, there's no mistake. It's the same vessel. Ha! see

the smoke! She is putting on steam. She is a fast sailer, and had it not been for the coming of darkness and a storm just after she gave us chase in these waters before, we would have been overhauled."

"No time is to be lost."

"No. We must show the cruiser a clean pair of heels."

"But what course shall we take?"

"I think the circumstances indicate but one."

"You propose then to run for the Island of the Seven Pines?"

"Yes; our island station affords the only hiding place for the black schooner which there is any possibility of your making."

"Right! Issue your orders to the crew."

Captain Hawk did so.

The men, who were all aware that the black schooner had recently become known to the government cruiser as a smuggler, sprang to their places.

All was bustle for a few moments on the deck.

The vessel tacked about to windward, and then Hawk himself took the wheel, and set her head for the Islands of the Seven Pines.

The wind freshened, as if to favor the flight of the black schooner.

She was a clean built craft, with long and slender bows, setting low in the waves. Her rakish masts carried every stitch of their canvas spread, and she went racing over the sea almost like a thing of life.

"Ha! the schooner is going finely! We shall give the cruiser a fine chase, let the end be what it may," said Captain Onslow, in tones of grim satisfaction.

A stern chase is proverbially a long one. Certainly the schooner promised to well deserve the confidence of the smuggler.

While Captain Hawk maintained his place at the wheel, Onslow, glass in hand, kept watch of the pursuing cruiser.

From time to time he commented upon her movements aloud, thus keeping Hawk fully informed as to the progress of the chase.

The crew hung about the rail watching the vessel they feared.

"It's evident she's putting on all steam, and she is gaining on us! At this rate, Hawk, she is bound to run us down before we can make the island of Seven Pines!" presently announced Onslow.

Hawk's dark face turned pale, and he replied:

"There's no chance for us, then. We cannot elude the government sea hound in darkness this time. The chase will end long before night comes."

"That's so. But we've no cargo—nothing to enable the cruiser to bring direct proof against us as smugglers."

"You forgot the prisoners—the three divers and the man from the lost treasure ship!"

"By heavens! you are right, Hawk."

"Those men will denounce us."

"If we are run down?"

"Certainly."

"It shall not be! The testimony of the prisoners would suffice to convict us."

"Yes. If not as smugglers, as kidnappers."

"Hawk, we must conceal the prisoners on shipboard, so

that there will be no chance for the cruiser to discover them."

"That can't be done."

"And why not! I know there is more than one hiding place on this craft."

"True. But were you ever on a vessel that was searched by revenue officers?"

"No."

"Well, then, let me tell you they are sleuthhounds. I would not risk their failing to discover all the secret compartments on our vessel."

"Say you so. Then what is to be done?"

"In regard to the captives?"

"Yes."

"There is only one course."

Hawk looked at Captain Onslow darkly, as he added:

"I mean we must get rid of them. Better run the risk of losing the sunken treasure than long imprisonment."

Onslow ground his teeth.

"Fate must be against me. I had begun to count most certainly on getting the sunken treasure. But the prisoners shall not betray us!"

He raised the glass which he had lowered, and again looked through it at the cruiser.

"She is gaining alarmingly now. We are doomed to be captured!" groaned the smuggler.

"Then no time should be lost in dealing with the prisoners."

"No. They must walk the plank. Like the pirates of other days we must act upon the theory that 'dead men tell no tales.'"

During the foregoing conversation the sailor from the lost treasure ship had stealthily approached near enough to Onslow and Hawk to overhear all they said.

Unseen he glided away.

In a moment he had reached the main hatchway and descended.

In his hand he carried a bunch of keys, which had been given him by the sailor who had brought the captives of the hold their morning meal.

"Merciful heaven! The cold-blooded villains mean to send us all to Davy Jones' locker. But we'll make a fight for life!" gritted the sailor.

He reached the heavy door of the compartment of the hold in which the divers were imprisoned at once.

By means of the key to the door which he found in the bunch he carried, he opened the portal.

The prisoners came forward. The sailor said hastily:

"Follow me instantly! A government cruiser is in pursuit of the smuggler, and likely to run her down. In order to prevent our giving evidence against them our captors have decided to make us walk the plank."

"Then we are lost!" said Mark Seaworth.

"No, while there's life there's hope," responded Drake.

He paused, and by means of another key opened another door, when followed by the others he had led the way forward.

"The arms room! Here is a supply of weapons! Secure revolvers and cutlasses! Quick! Quick!" admonished Drake.

The party quickly thereupon armed themselves.

(To be Continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

SAYS RUSSIAN PLANS WERE SOLD.

An amazing story is related in a Geneva dispatch to "Excelsior," Paris, Feb. 27, concerning the Russian Baron Ygor Tillnsky, now at Zurich. The baron declares that he holds a claim on the Japanese Government for \$70,000,000. According to his story three Russian staff officers of revolutionary tendencies sold the plans of the Pacific fortresses, including Port Arthur, to the Japanese Government at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War.

They received in payment three checks amounting to little more than \$23,000,000, each payable at Tokio on March 22, 1915. The officers further contracted to remain in the service of Japan until the checks were paid.

Negotiations for raising money on the checks were opened from Zurich with banks in London, Amsterdam and Dresden, but no advances could be obtained unless the original contract could be examined.

In the meantime the Japanese Government learned of the affair, and its consul at Zurich was instructed to investigate. The Russian Government also took up the matter and sent the Russian military attache at Berne to Zurich to make inquiries.

DYING EMPRESS' GRIEF.

The London Daily Mail's Peking correspondent wires, Feb. 25, that the empress Dowager, aunt of the eight-year-old boy Pu-Yi, who has retained the title of Manchu Emperor since the establishment of the Republic of China, made a tragic statement before she died. Her last words were:

"I and the Emperor alone in the world. We have scarcely a friend now. I must leave him alone. How shall my spirit find rest in the next world? What 'face' shall I possess when I rejoin our ancestors in the ancestral temple—the last Empress of a ruined dynasty?"

When no longer able to speak, the Empress Dowager pointed in the direction of the boy Emperor and signed to Shih-Hsu, his guardian, who knelt at the bedside. Apparently she intended to address a last appeal to Shih-Hsu to guard the boy.

A dispatch from Peking to The Daily Telegraph says:

"There seems to be little doubt that the Empress's demise was a signal for the eunuchs to loot the palace thoroughly during the small hours of Saturday.

"Connoisseurs are now rubbing their hands, full of anticipation of the many priceless objects that will soon be offered for sale. The present occasion is unique, because the inner Winter Palace was carefully guarded by the international expedition of 1900, and the contents were absolutely untouched during the general sack of the city following the relief of the legations."

WHY ARE BANANAS CHEAP?

Hundreds of millions of dollars are invested in storage facilities for apple and other American fruits, yet the retail prices mount year by year, says the Houston Post, and the fact that the crops have been enormous cuts not

the slightest figure in the market price. Apples are dearer now in cities than they were twenty years ago, when the per capita production was less and when the means of preservation and distribution were in their infancy.

Turn from this phenomenon and consider an even stranger one. During the years while the price of home-grown apples has mounted and fluctuated widely the foreign-grown banana has had a vastly increased importation and consumption and has steadily decreased in price and steadily increased in quality. The husband and housewife of to-day can look back to fifteen or twenty years ago when little bananas retailed for five cents apiece and when an indulgence in them was a luxury reserved for some special festive occasion. To-day one can buy for 15 or 20 cents a dozen bananas each twice the size of those offered for sale in the years of the past generation.

There is no secret about the low cost of bananas. They are produced and handled on an enormous scale by companies which place them on the market without the intervention of middlemen who extort large commissions. These companies have learned that there is more money for them in selling a huge total of product at a low net profit than there is in extracting a high profit from small sales at prices prohibitive to the average consumer.

A VAST TERRITORY.

The Turkish possessions of Asia cover 682,000 square miles, extending from the Black Sea on the north to the southern tip of Arabia and from the Mediterranean on the west to the borders of Persia and Transcaucasia. The area of Asiatic Turkey is over ten times that of Turkey in Europe and includes the divisions of Armenia, Asia Minor, Kurdistan, Mesopotamia and wide strips along the western and eastern borders of Arabia. Within its confines are cities famous in history and legend—Damascus, Bagdad, Smyrna, Mecca and Jerusalem.

The population of Turkey in Asia, according to recent estimates, is nearly 17,000,000, made up principally of Turks, Arabs, Greeks, Kurds, Circassians and Armenians. The majority are Mohammedans, but there is a large Christian population in Armenia and Palestine.

The Turks captured Constantinople in 1453, after overthrowing Asia Minor and what is now European Turkey. The city, whose downfall marked the end of the Byzantine empire and of Christian rule in those regions, was made the seat of the Ottoman empire, succeeding Adrianople.

The Moslem rulers of Constantinople extended their conquests farther into Europe. They took possession of the Grecian peninsula and obtained footholds in Hungary and on the Adriatic coast. An alliance between Venice, Spain and the Pope defeated the Turks in the battle of Lepanto in 1571, and the decline of Ottoman power in the west began. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Greece, Servia, Montenegro and the Crimean provinces of Russia were wrested from Turkish rule. Constantinople has remained in Mohammedan hands continuously since its capture, nearly 500 years ago.

NED, BESS AND MYSELF

OR,

THE SEARCH FOR THE KING'S LOST GOLD MINE

By ED KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XV (continued)

We had been somewhat fearful lest our cannons might burst, but they had stood the first test well and we did not think that we should have to fire any of them more than once.

The hillmen were terrified not only by the noise, but by the havoc caused in their ranks by the hurtling missiles, and they broke and fled in the greatest alarm.

I fired another shot as they retreated, and, while it did not cause the damage that the others had done, it nevertheless showed them that we were a terrible enemy and one not to be trifled with.

The fled precipitately and many of our men followed them, but I honestly believe that it was more through fright than from a desire to rout the enemy, and I said as much to Ned.

"I don't doubt it," he laughed. "It's enough to frighten any one to see our idols, as they call them, spitting out fire and smoke and mowing down our enemies like cornstalks."

"I think we've done enough, however," I said. "The blacks won't return after this. I'm sorry to have killed so many, but it was either their lives or ours."

The black giants did not return, and after a while our men, hearing no repetition of the dreadful sounds which had so alarmed them, came back and reported that the enemy had fled to the hills, leaving many of their dead behind them.

We were regarded with greater respect than ever, although our subjects now knew that what they had called our idols were only "fire sticks" on a large scale.

"Him think you am spirits," said Sam to me in explanation, "all same very good spirits to island men, 'cause him drive away bad men, shoot thunder and lightning at him, make puff-puff, kill um like pig, no let him come again."

"All right, Sam," I said. "But you can tell them we are not spirits and that we mean to take care of them and drive away all the bad men just as long as they do what we wish."

"Him do, him 'fraid not to do," said Sam quickly, and I knew that our hold on these simple people was stronger than ever.

The hillmen did not trouble us again and for a time we saw nothing of them, and when at last they began to appear they were very respectful and asked for aid instead of threatening us as before.

I asked the former king of the island for more information about Nomolos and he answered:

"He is the evil spirit of these people, the destroyer, and

they all fear him. When an island sank out of sight many generations ago, drowning all the people, it was he who caused it."

"Then he was not the king who owned the gold mines?"

"No, he was the evil spirit and all fear him. He is a wicked spirit; he sent the terrible waves that nearly drowned you and split the southern island in two and drowned many of the people."

"And this island that sank?"

"Was to the south. The wise men say that it will come up again, but I do not believe it."

"Such things have happened," I said, but the king seemed doubtful and I said no more about it.

"Whether Nomolos is the evil spirit or whether he is the old king who had the gold mines, as some say, we must find them," I said to Ned, and we continued our search.

We hunted over his island and found nothing; we searched Bess' island and found nearly everything but gold, and then we went to my island and delved in the stream on the way to the volcano, where we had found the gold dust.

We followed it to its source and to its mouth and worked every possible pocket from one end to the other, but although we found considerable of it, we did not come upon it in the quantities that we had supposed we would.

We came upon several rich placers along the course of the stream, but we found no gold worth mentioning in the rocks and no evidences of any mine that had once been worked.

We spent months at this work, and as the rainy season was again approaching, we were forced to agree that we would have to abandon it without having accomplished very much.

We had done a good deal, however, for we had found coal and stored it up to use in our furnaces; we had made glass and had panes to our windows; we had built stone piles; we had educated the people to a great extent; we had hunted, fished and farmed, and we had washed out gold, but still we were not content.

We had carried soil and had planted seed on the southern island; we had established a friendly feeling between the different people inhabiting the islands; we had brought them all under our rule, but we had not found the king's lost gold mines and we were not satisfied.

"Is there any use in going over the southern island again in search of them?" I asked Ned one day. "That old man gives us more trouble than any one, and if he can stir up his wretched people against us he will do it, in

spite of all that we have done to make his miserable little island habitable."

"We might," said Ned. "We can take a larger force and go more thoroughly over it. All we have to do now is to fire off a cannon with a blank cartridge in it to quiet these people."

"Well, I will make one more effort," I said, "but I don't believe the mines are there all the same."

We started with a large number of canoes and a force of a thousand men, and, landing on the island, we built houses and made every preparation for a long stay.

We had picks and shovels and began to go over the ground most carefully, but at the end of a week we had found not the slightest trace of gold.

The old man stormed at us when he met us, threatened to call up the evil spirits from the caves and from the sea and drive us away, but we went on just the same.

We gave the people decent homes instead of their mud huts, we supplied them with food and clothing, but the old man raved at us, called us intruders and threatened us with all sorts of evil, going about half clad, as before, living in a wretched hovel and subsisting on the coarsest and meanest food.

One day, after he had threatened us more than usual, there was the most violent storm I had ever witnessed, lasting for hours, during which time the island seemed to tremble to its very foundations, the rain poured in torrents, the heavens were fairly ablaze with lightning, the thunder seemed almost continuous and the waves beat with great fury upon the beach.

Many times we trembled for the security of our houses, built on the high ground and sheltered by the woods as they were, but at last the night passed and with it the storm, and once more the sun shone out and everything seemed bright and beautiful.

Fearing that the poor islanders might have suffered, Ned, Bess and myself went out to get tidings of them and came out upon a high bluff overlooking the billowy sea.

"Hello! What's that?" cried Ned, pointing to the south. "I never saw that reef before."

"Reef?" I echoed. "It is not a reef. It is an island. By George, Ned, I'll bet it's the sunken island come up again during the night. There was war enough among the elements to bring up any number of islands."

"That's so, it is an island, and a big one, quite as large as this. I wonder how long it will stay there. I would really like to visit it."

It was still there at noon and we three, with Sam and a score of our trusty fellows, embarked in canoes, a few only having been wrecked, and rowed over to the island, two or three miles distant.

It was like a huge rock, and, of course, there were no trees and no vegetation, but we were interested, nevertheless, and tramped over it for a considerable distance, when suddenly, spying a singular looking opening in a ledge that towered high above our heads, I entered, actuated by I know not what motive, and walked a few yards and suddenly rushed out again, crying excitedly:

"Ned, Bess, I have found the lost gold mines!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GOLD HUNTERS.

It was quite true that I had found the lost mines for which we had so long searched in vain.

None of us had ever supposed they were at the bottom of the sea, and the story of the sunken island had meant nothing to us in thinking of them.

I now recalled that the old man on the nearly barren southern island had told me once that the mines were under the sea, but I had never believed him and had not thought again of what he had said after it had been said until now.

When I entered what I had supposed was a mere hole in the rocks it was simply from curiosity and nothing else.

I may have expected to find fish or possibly some strange sea monster brought suddenly up from the bottom of the ocean, but my wildest imaginings could not have realized what I did see.

I had gone a few steps into the opening when the light, coming through a fissure overhead, shone full upon something that glittered as nothing else could.

It was a mass of pure, shining yellow gold, and there it lay, piled up before me, in bars, lumps and irregular pieces, some of them large, some small.

It needed no more than a glance to show me that here was a mine, here the storehouse of the old king, and, with a strange feeling in my heart, I rushed out into the open air, crying:

"Hurrah, hurrah! Ned, Bess, I have found the lost gold mines at last!"

Ned thought I had gone mad and Bess did not know what to think, but I seized a hand of each, hurried with them into the cave and said:

"There! Look for yourselves. Isn't this gold? What else is it? Would anything else have stood being buried under the sea all these years? Here, Ned; you have your ax. Cut one of these lumps in two and prove it."

Ned cut through one of the smaller bars and the outside showed bright and yellow. Enough to satisfy any one.

"We don't know how long the island is going to remain above water, now that it has come up," I said, "and we must make haste. Come, we will go back to the island, get picks and shovels and all the men we can put to work and gather the loose stuff. After that we can dig."

"There seems to have been a vein opened here," said Ned, "and the gold already taken out and melted into bars has been stored here as well. We must have lights to see just where to work. Art, my boy, you're a trump! You didn't believe in the gold, but you were willing to look for it and you have found it."

"Yes, and now we have gunpowder, we can blast the rocks, and having iron, we can dig and pick and load, so you see, old chap, that it was just as well that we found our iron and coal first. Otherwise we could not have done our work so well."

We went over to the southern island and got a large force of men and everything they needed to work with.

We placed lights in the cave and we opened fissures overhead, then, dividing our men into groups, set them to work.

(To be Continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

Eugene Etienne, French Minister of War, recently submitted to the Cabinet a bill extending the active service of soldiers of all arms in the French army to three years instead of two years, as at present. This measure will increase the peace footing of the army 50 per cent. A measure of this kind was expected and appears to be in accord with the wave of patriotic feeling passing over the country.

A wedding ring, buried twenty years ago on the finger of Mrs. Lorinda Isabelle Martin, was removed recently from her coffin by order of her aged husband, George Martin, of Clayton, Mo. He wished to make of it a gift to his daughters, Miss Alice Martin, society favorite and exponent of classic dancing, and Miss Edith Martin, to hand down to future generations. Mr. Martin, who is eighty years old, was a pioneer expert grain dealer of St. Louis.

The booming of customs receipts and the increased drinking and smoking of Americans, yielding enormous internal revenue returns, have given the government a surplus of \$7,379,000 for the current fiscal year, as compared with a deficit of \$20,570,000 a year ago. Total receipts for February reached \$54,803,000, of which \$52,839,000 was expended. The working balance which the Democratic administration will find in the Treasury, as indicated by today's statement, will be about \$78,000,000.

Miss Zelle Emerson, the American suffragette, was sent to the hospital of Holloway jail, London, recently, presumably the victim of forcible feeding. The young woman was held incommunicado, and it is said that her condition was serious. Miss Emerson had been sentenced to imprisonment at hard labor for smashing windows. She declared a hunger strike and the prison authorities attempted forcible feeding. Forcible feeding, according to Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, who were forced to undergo it, is the most refined torture imaginable and has caused great and lasting injury to prisoners.

The project of deepening the Hudson River from New York City to Troy to twenty-seven feet is feasible, according to a report submitted to the Albany Society of Civil Engineers by a special committee appointed to investigate the subject. "The completion of the barge canal, the Panama Canal, the Canadian system of canals, and other canal projects now contemplated," says the report, "means a great revival in handling freight by water transportation, and this project should go hand in hand with the Hudson River project, so as to be ready for operation as soon as the other projects are completed."

That a man cannot live on \$720 a year and "keep up appearances" was the decision of the Senate Feb. 25 when it overturned its postoffice committee, voted out all \$720 salaries for postal clerks and mail carriers, and accepted \$800 minimum salary fixed by the House. The de-

cision came at the end of a fight in which the advocates of higher government salaries clashed repeatedly with those who declared the workingmen of the country had "to pay the bill." The Senate adopted the \$800 salary by a vote of 31 to 17. Senator Ashurst produced figures during the debate to show that the average man in a responsible position could not maintain his family for less than \$768.54. "That includes nothing for a book, a theater ticket, an excursion, or anything that makes life worth living," he declared.

The International Map of the World, on a scale of 1 to 1,000,000, will, when completed eight or ten years hence, cover a total area of about 150 feet by 75 feet, or the surface of a globe 40 feet in diameter. It will consist of about 1,500 sheets, each representing a section of 4 degrees in latitude and 6 in longitude. The first sheet of the United States portion has just been published by the Geological Survey, in Washington. It is known in the general scheme as "sheet North K 19," but will be more popularly known as the "Boston sheet," and embraces Rhode Island, and portions of New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and Nova Scotia. It is printed in six colors. Ocean depths and terrestrial altitude are shown by contour lines and graduated tints. It represents the beginning of a more accurate map of the United States than any that now exists.

A decision has been rendered in the United States district court, in San Francisco, which will put a new interpretation on the question of the branding and misbranding of foods in compliance with the pure food and drug act. In the case of the United States against the Chirardelli Candy Company it was held that the company could sell chocolates manufactured in this country and labeled "Chirardelli's Italian chocolates." The name Italian was held to be descriptive of the style of the confection and not the place where it is made. Counsel for the candy makers brought out a list of names of common household articles, such as Jamaica ginger, gum arabic, English walnuts, Saratoga chips, German fried potatoes, French and English mutton chops, to prove their contention that "Italian chocolates" merely designated the "style" and not the "country." Government prosecutors "ditched" their case at the outset when they called two witnesses, well-known San Francisco candy men, who, when asked how they interpreted the meaning of "Italian chocolates," unhesitatingly answered that they took it to mean the "style" of the chocolates, and in no way understood it to mean the country in which they were made. The jury was out only long enough to cast one ballot, and then returned a verdict of not guilty to the charge of misbranding the confection. The court held that the names were lawful, especially since the company had the words "San Francisco, Cal.," printed upon the boxes in which the "Italian chocolates" are sold.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, MARCH 28, 1913.

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ITEMS OF CURRENT NEWS

The report of the special commission to fix the boundary line between Texas and New Mexico, approved Feb. 21 by President Taft, decides in favor of the Texas contentions. The point in dispute was as to where the bed of the Rio Grande River existed in 1858, when the boundary originally was run and known as the Clark boundary, the monument marking it having been washed away since then. The report settled a dispute of fifty years' standing.

The Board of Trade of London announces that one member of the scientific staff of the Scotia, the Dundee whaler which is being equipped as an iceberg patrol ship for the North Atlantic, will be a trained meteorologist. Dr. Assmann, Director of the Royal Prussian aeronautical observatory at Lindenberg, has provided a number of kites for meteorological work. Long range wireless telegraphic apparatus is being provided free of charge by the Marconi Company. Two wireless operators will be employed in order that a constant watch may be kept.

The parcel postman is to deliver certified milk direct from the cow to the consumer in hermetically sealed receptacles. The milk will be prevented from varying more than 2 degrees in twenty-four hours from the specified temperature at which it is ready for shipment. Edward N. Hurley, who, aside from his manufacturing interests in Chicago, busies himself with a model farm of four hundred acres at Wheaton, Ill., is the originator of the plan, which involves an endless chain of refrigerator bottles between the producer and consumer by way of the parcel post.

The Secretary of the Interior may be premature in his belief that the electrification of all the transcontinental railways is at hand; but he is certainly justified in attaching great importance to the grant by the Government of permission for the Great Falls Power Company of Montana to transmit over the public domain the necessary power to electrify 450 miles of track of the main line of the Chicago, Milwaukee and Puget Sound Railway in Montana and Idaho. In respect of the length of track covered, this is by far the most important application of electric traction so far made to a steam railroad.

A Wisconsin college professor has formed a company to dig for two million pounds sterling, believed to have been buried more than two hundred years ago on Oak Island, a short distance from Chester, Nova Scotia. Captain John Welling, for fifteen years first officer on a government steam dredge, has charge of the work. An unsuccessful attempt was made by three men to recover this treasure in 1795. They abandoned the work after reaching a depth of thirty feet. Early in the nineteenth century another attempt was made to reach the treasure, but after digging ninety-five feet and unearthing a large stone on which was carved "Ten feet below are \$10,000,000 buried," the pit filled with water and the work was abandoned.

JOKES AND JESTS.

"Do you like fiction?" "Well, I generally enjoy my husband's letters, whether I believe them or not."

The Chief—Any trolley victims to-day? Reporter—Yes, a fellow on the crosstown line got a plugged 50-cent piece.

"I've seen that young fellow somewhere before." "He draws soda water in a downtown drug store." "That's it. I recognized his fizz."

Hicks—I understand that that new cold storage company is making a lot of money. You are in it on the ground floor, aren't you? Wicks (mournfully)—No, they froze me out.

"I want to see Mrs. Smythe," said the visitor. "You can't," said the servant. "She has the toothache." "You must be mistaken," the man replied. "I'm her dentist and I have her teeth here in this package."

Mrs. Von Blumer—I had no idea Mrs. Plankington was so mean until I went shopping with her. Von Blumer—What did she do? Mrs. Von Blumer—I insisted upon paying her car fare and she let me do it.

Mr. Pokus—There's the only woman in this town whose affairs ain't gossiped about at the Sewin' Circle meetin's. Mr. Citiman—How does she escape? Mr. Pokus—By good management—she allers gits there ahead of any of the rest of 'em.

Mother—I gave each of you boys an orange. Charlie, you said you wouldn't eat yours until after dinner. And you, Jack, said the same. Have you deceived me? Charlie—No, mother, we didn't eat our own oranges. I ate Jack's and he ate mine.

A very simple statement proved very unfortunate to a savings institution in the rural district recently. An editor, in writing of the institution in his paper, said: "The president is a very tall man; the cashier is short." And in less than an hour the excited depositors were asking, "How much?—how much?"

SANG LOO, THE CHINAMAN.

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

"Were you ever in a Chinese opium-den?" asked a friend of mine, a prominent Chicago detective, the other day.

"No, were you?" was my reply.

"Yes, and I came very near never getting out alive."

"Indeed! Tell me about it."

"Just in your line, eh?"

"Precisely, and it will be all the more interesting to my readers as a story because it is the truth."

"Well, sit down a moment here in the District-Attorney's office. It's half an hour before I go before the Grand Jury on that sensational murder case of ours, and you shall have the story of my experience in a Chinese 'opium-joint,' as we call the opium smoking-den of the festive 'washee-washee.'"

I became seated, and the old detective heaved ahead:

"You may or may not remember that about two years ago the attention of the police and the public in general was called to the fact that an unusually large number of cases of 'unknown persons found drowned' were reported.

"The suspicions of the authorities were aroused, and our agency took the matter in hand.

"In a city like Chicago or New York, it is difficult to trace even a single man who mysteriously disappears, and while in more than one of the cases of 'found drowned' the victim was fully identified, in no one of these cases could it be positively decided whether there had been foul play or suicide at the bottom of the matter.

"As fate decided it in each case where identification was accomplished, there was no evidence of foul play upon the remains of the deceased.

"I reflected a good deal upon the case, and it occurred to me that if, as I suspected, the persons found dead had met with foul play before they were cast into the water, they might have been drugged.

"I consulted a medical expert connected with one of the colleges here, and it was agreed upon between us that when the next body was found in the water without any evidence of violence on it, he would make a critical post-mortem examination, such as the authorities had not yet made, as it required great skill and considerable expense, involving chemical analysis and many experiments, an enumeration of which would be devoid of interest to the general reader, and therefore I will not weary you by stating them to you.

"Within a week after my consultation with the medical expert a body was found in the river. There was no external evidence of violence.

"The body was that of a middle-aged and well-dressed man, but there were no valuables on his person, and no evidence whereby he could be identified.

"A description of the unknown man was published, and the body exposed, as usual, in the morgue for identification.

"Meanwhile my friend, the medical expert, began his investigation, without destroying the face of the deceased.

"Day by day he continued his work. An analysis of the

stomach failed to reveal any trace of poison; but although he kept the secret from me until he had exhausted his skill and was sure he was right, the very first day of his examination he solved the mystery of the dead man's taking off.

"When all was done he called at my office.

"The unknown found drowned was killed by opium," he said.

"He then went on to give me a description of the appearance of an opium slave. So vivid was his picture of the appearance of the complexion of a victim of the terrible 'opium habit' that I felt sure I could recognize it if I met a case.

"That very day as I was on my way to dinner, I was accosted by a pale-faced young woman, whose appearance at once riveted my attention, for the opium case was in my mind.

"She was selling flowers, and as she presented her basket, and my eyes dwelt upon her face, I was certain that in her I beheld a victim of the deadly drug.

"I purchased a button-hole bouquet, and when she turned away I watched her. Indeed, I followed her in the stealthy way of a shadow, and she did not evade my secret espionage until I saw her enter a Chinese laundry on Clark street.

"I at once made up my mind that before the sun of another day arose I would see the inside of an opium den, and I had heard it whispered in police circles that the very Chinese laundry in which the flower-girl disappeared was suspected of being an 'opium joint.'

"When I reached my office I found a young lady waiting for me.

"At a glance I saw she was undoubtedly from the country, as there was a certain air of rustic simplicity about her that could scarcely be mistaken.

"My name is Jenny James, sir, and I am from Michigan. I came to this city in search of my father, who was a small country merchant, and who came to this city with a considerable sum of money, with which to purchase goods, in his possession. He overstayed his time and we became alarmed. Yesterday I read the description of an unknown man found drowned, in a Chicago daily paper, and the description was that of my poor father," said the girl.

"When she had proceeded thus far she burst into tears. As soon as she could compose her feelings she continued:

"Upon my arrival here I proceeded to the morgue, and there my worst fears were fully realized. The man described in the newspapers really was my poor father. Oh, sir, he has been murdered and robbed, and mother and I are left alone and almost penniless! I have come to ask you to find my father's murderer, and recover his money. You are a great detective, and I beg of you to do this, and Heaven will reward you. I will gladly pay you if you find my father's murderer; but my father had all our money with him, and I can give you nothing now."

"Thus the poor girl concluded. She seemed to have perfect faith in my power to do all she asked, and I was interested by her simple faith and deep distress.

"I will do all in my power, my girl, to find your father's money, and also his assassins. But we detectives are only

mortals, and Heaven has not given the most skilful of us the power of rending the dark veils that hide all crimes," I said.

"I know you will succeed, and for myself and my widowed mother I thank you," replied the young girl, fervently.

"I sincerely hope so," was my answer, and then I said:

"Pardon the question, but was your father addicted to the use of opium?"

"The girl blushed, as she replied:

"He was. It was his one vice, and he could not live without the awful drug. He contracted the habit while suffering from malarial neuralgia. The opium was prescribed by a physician."

"I felt I held the clew to Mr. James' murder.

"That night, in disguise, I visited the den of Sang Loo—such was the name of the Chinaman who ostensibly ran a laundry in the South Clark street basement which I had seen the flower-girl enter. When I entered the place I found a hideous old Chinaman who was, as I soon found out, Sang Loo himself, and who may be justly called 'the Chinese opium fiend,' and two other Celestials present.

"There was no evidence of the 'fatal pipe' about, but when I displayed some money and said 'I wanted to "hit the pipe,"' as the Chinamen say, I was conducted to an interior room.

"There all the paraphernalia of the opium den was seen. The pipe, the lamp, the divan upon which the smoker reclines, and a jar of Chinese opium.

"I took my place upon a divan, and while one of the hideous Chinamen 'fed the pipe,' as he called keeping the opium in it on fire, the others jabbered together.

"Just before I entered the den I had taken an enormous dose of a preparation furnished by my medical friend, which he said would counteract the effect of the drug that I might smoke with impunity as much as was necessary in order to penetrate all the hidden mysteries of the 'joint.'

"I played my part well, and when I was pretty well gone, to all appearances, I saw the old fiend Sang Loo take a dark mass from a jar he had hidden under the divan and apply it to the pipe.

"I had no doubt this was the concentrated opium intended to kill, and as I thought, what if my medical friend's prescription were not strong enough to combat its influence, I almost betrayed myself by a shudder.

"But I seemed to smoke, although the stuff made my brain reel. Finally I feigned insensibility, and I felt myself dragged from the bunk into another apartment.

"Here all my valuables, and everything that could possibly assist in my identification, were removed from my person, and then I was left alone.

"I arose silently, and found myself in a small underground apartment. The door was secured, and there was no escape. I had a revolver cunningly concealed in one of my boots, and the opium fiend had not discovered it, so that, if it came to the worst, I could fight for my life; but it was my purpose to play the game out, and find out if the victims of the fiend were consigned to the water, as we supposed.

"A moment later I heard a light footstep, and I sank

back upon the floor. Directly the flower-girl entered, and closed the door.

"Another victim! Oh, if I only dared leave this accursed den! But I am the slave of opium, and then I am friendless, and the Chinamen would find me out, and murder me. As long as I decoy strangers who have acquired the terrible opium habit here, I am given food and clothing. My heaven, if I could but shake off the bondage of the awful drug! When I am myself, nothing could tempt me to lure men to this den of death, but when the drug is in my brain I am reckless. Would that I could save this poor man, but I cannot. They will carry him away, and throw him into the lake, where he will be drowned."

"Thus muttered the girl. A moment later she glided away.

"Not long after that Sang Loo crept into the room.

"In his hand he had a large knife.

"Did he mean to make sure of my death by plunging it into me? Had his suspicions been aroused that all was not right?

"These thoughts flashed through my brain.

"But the Chinaman passed by me, and prying up a board in the floor with his knife, he took some money from a bag concealed there, and withdrew.

"Half an hour later he came in again, accompanied by two Chinamen. I was placed in a large basket, and a mass of rags thrown over me. Then I was carried into the street, the basket was deposited into a hand-cart, and Sang Loo and one of his companions trundled me away toward the lake.

"We had reached the water-side, and the Chinamen came to a halt. They were about to throw me into the water, when I suddenly leaped up, and with two quick blows from the butt of my pistol, I downed the opium fiends.

"To handcuff them was the work of a moment, and then I marched them to the station.

"That night we raided Sang Loo's den and captured the other Chinaman. A considerable sum of money, and a pocketbook containing the money Mr. James had in his possession when he left home, minus a few dollars, was found. Jennie James identified it and it was restored to her.

"As for the Chinamen, Sang Loo suicided in jail, and his two accomplices were sent to State prison.

"The girl's evidence served to convict them, and she was allowed to turn State's evidence, but she was sent to the House of Correction, in the hope that she might be cured of the terrible habit that had wrecked her life.

"From the girl's statement it seemed that she was a friendless orphan whom Sang Loo had picked up in the city of Baltimore, and taught to love opium. Also from her evidence the court was convinced that at least a large percentage of the persons who had been found drowned were decoyed to their doom by the Chinamen.

"As for me, I had the headache for a week as the result of my experience with 'the pipe' and the antidote combined.

"No more opium in mine, if you please."

With these words my detective friend excused himself.

GOOD READING

While flying a kite at Portsmouth, Va., March 2, Sidney Bright, sixteen years old, was instantly killed by electricity. The boy attached a thin wire to the kite, instead of string, and when the kite fell across an electric wire, 11,000 volts passed through his body.

An investigation as to the possibility of a universal one-cent first class postal rate was proposed in the House Feb. 26 by Representative McCoy, of New Jersey. The resolution would authorize the appointment of two Senators and two members of the House to conduct the investigation and would provide \$25,000 to defray their expenses.

According to the Constantinople cable to the Daily News, Italy is secretly negotiating with the Young Turks who are now quite friendly with their recent enemies. "It seems probable," says the dispatch, "that the remnants of the Ottoman Empire will fall by and by under some sort of Austria-Italian protection. Recent negotiations with Italians refer to the purchase by the latter of the Islands of Rhodes, Lebos and Stampalia, now under Italian occupation, for \$16,000,000, the money to be paid now, the goods not to be delivered till peace is concluded."

Of all the great cities, Buenos Ayres is said to be growing the most rapidly. The most artistically built of the cities of the new world. It reminds the visitor of Madrid or Paris. This magnificent capital of the Argentine Republic had in 1800 only 40,000 inhabitants; in 1852, 76,000; in 1869, 187,000; in 1887, 429,000; in 1895, 655,000; in 1904, 951,000; the census of 1910 brought it up to 1,282,117, while the population since that time has grown astonishingly. The mayor, in a recent public speech, said that in four years the population of Buenos Ayres, at the present rate of growth, would surpass that of Paris.

Mrs. Robert F. Scott, the Antarctic explorer's widow, is entitled to be called Lady Scott hereafter. King George Feb. 25, bestowed on her "the same rank, style and precedence as if her husband had been nominated a Knight Commander of the Bath, as he would have been had he survived." These dispatches foretold a fortnight ago that the King would grant to Mrs. Scott the posthumous honors intended for her heroic husband. Sir Ernest Shackleton, who arrived in England, said he regarded the suggestion that the bodies of Captain Scott and his companions be brought home as unwise. There could be no better burial place, he said, than their scene of action amid the eternal snows.

A table has recently been put on the market which is of the ordinary library type, but is also provided with four or more outlets of plug sockets, inconspicuously placed on the side below the table top. This affords means of connecting up electrical apparatus such as fans, cooking

utensils, reading lamps, etc. In an iron box secured to the under side of the top are a meter, main switch, fuses and the necessary wiring. Connection with the lighting main may be made through a steel conduit passing from the iron box through the baseboard to the outside wall of the building. This simple device comprises all the electrical outfit necessary for the electrical comforts of a living room. By using extension cords a vacuum cleaner may be efficiently employed all over the house.

A mechanism has lately been attached to the time clock of the Hamburg Observatory, by which the exact official time is transmitted to the telephone system of the city. From the fifty-fifth to the sixtieth second of each minute the apparatus transmits a musical signal, which is followed by a phonographic announcement of the exact minute. The signals are transmitted by special wire to the headquarters of the telephone system, and thence to each local exchange. Any telephone subscriber who wishes to get the exact time has only to ask for the time connection at his exchange, and to listen for the phonographic announcement. This is an improvement upon the American method by which time signals are transmitted by telegraph only once a day.

A poison, the most powerful known, is reported to have been extracted by a German chemist from the seeds of the ricinus, the familiar castor oil plant, and has been attracting much attention on account of its remarkable properties. Its power is estimated to be so great that a gram—about a thirtieth of an ounce—would kill a million and a half guinea pigs. If administered so as to cause severe illness without death, it gives immunity against a larger quantity, and the dose can be gradually increased until more than a thousand times as much can be endured as would kill an untreated animal. Though arsenic, morphine and other poisons can be taken in larger and larger quantity, says Popular Mechanics, nothing approaching this marvellous increase in dose can be borne.

Decision by John R. Wilson, superintendent of schools, of Paterson, N. J., that all forty-five members of the junior class at the Paterson Normal School will have to lose a six months' term on account of "cribbing" in mathematics, aroused a storm of protest there recently. The alleged offense took place at the last examination late in January. Eight of the girls were accused of "cribbing" the answers to problems and the matter was referred to the superintendent, who, after making a careful investigation, decided that the entire class, instead of graduating at the February term, 1914, will have to wait until the June term, 1914. A majority of the young women are indignant, and say they will put up a fight before the Board of Education to have the decision revoked. They do not believe the innocent should suffer with the guilty.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

\$15,000 NECKLACE FOUND.

The pearl necklace belonging to Mrs. A. A. Sprague, 2d, of No. 1130 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, and valued at \$15,000, which was lost on a sleeping car between Boston and Chicago last September, has been returned to its owner.

While the police of the leading cities and private detectives were searching for the necklace, it adorned a five-year-old girl, one of the six children of a crippled night watchman.

The night watchman, who worked at a manufacturing plant, noticed a bit of "glass" in a rubbish heap beside the railroad track which adjoins the factory. He picked it up and gave it to his little daughter, who was delighted to possess a fine string of "beads."

Recently the child, attracted by some "beads" in the window of a jewelry shop, showed the proprietor that she, too, had some pretty ones. Thus the truth came out. An expert confirmed the value of the jewels, and the owner was sought. Mrs. Sprague saw the advertisement, and the necklace came back to its rightful owner. The watchman has been liberally rewarded.

KIDNAPPED BY AEROPLANE.

Spy fever is once more epidemic on both sides of the Austro-Russian frontier. The mayor of a small town near Plock, in Russian Poland, declares that he was kidnapped by an Austrian air scout several days ago. According to his story, he heard the sound of an aeroplane late at night, and when it descended in a field near the town, he went to capture the occupants armed only with the insignia of his office.

He alleges that the two airmen turned the tables by binding him hand and foot and lashing him to the body of the aeroplane. They entered their seats, warned their prisoner not to struggle, and resumed their flight. The terrified mayor was finally brought to earth near the town of Bar, sixty miles away, and before he could give the alarm his aerial kidnappers vanished.

Frontier guards continually report the passage of Russian aeroplanes at night. An Austrian aeroplane which had to descend in Russia two days ago was confiscated and the airmen arrested. At Lemberg forty-two Russians, including a number of women, are awaiting trial for espionage.

EIGHT WIRELESS STATIONS.

The programme of encircling the globe by a Marconi wireless telegraph system will soon be under way through the establishment of eight new sub-stations which will be erected by the J. G. White Engineering Corporation. Referring to the importance of wireless telegraphy as a peace influence, J. G. White, chairman of the finance committee, said:

"I believe that with every additional wireless station

we are one step nearer universal peace. The cable systems have had more to do recently with peace than any other single agency except printing presses, which are fed by the cables. The peoples of the world no longer have to wait for weeks, during which there is time for their passions to become inflamed, to learn the attitude of another nation in an international controversy. A prompt answer, almost as much as a soft answer, turns away wrath, especially when you are dealing with peoples and not individuals.

"In South America the wireless stations in Brazil will tie the central government to its remote provinces where it has been found impossible to maintain telegraph lines through the jungles and the desert wastes."

DIES ON HIS YACHT.

James Bartlett Hammond, inventor of the typewriter that bears his name, died suddenly at St. Augustine, Fla., in his seventy-fourth year. He came here on his yacht. For more than twenty-five years he had sailed about in anticipation that some time he would die on board. He had given directions that in such an event the body was to be taken to New York for funeral services in the chapel of the Union Theological Seminary at Broadway and 120th Street and for burial at Elmsford, N. Y. These directions were followed.

The public first knew of Mr. Hammond as an inventor. When wealth began to roll his way he made it a rule to distribute annually 10 per cent. of his profits among the men and women in his company, to give them all pay for their vacations and to distribute gifts in money among them for specially meritorious work. He provided outings for them, automobile rides and otherwise added to their pleasures. He liked to believe that he was in closer touch with his workpeople than any other manufacturer in the world.

In 1907 he was taken ill and assigned property estimated later by him at \$2,000,000 to various persons, to be kept by them in case of his death but to be returned to him if he recovered. When he became well the property was not transferred back to him. He sued for it in the courts.

This action by him led to charges that he was insane. A brother sent alienists to examine him. On their report he was committed to Bellevue for observation, and then for a time to a sanitarium. The worst that could be brought out against him in the public inquiry as to his mental condition was that it had been his practice to drink seven highballs a day. He promised to cut down the allowance, and that ended the insanity charge. Then he pushed his case for the retransfer of his property and won.

The first day he returned to his factory after these troubles the work-people unhitched the horses from his carriage and ran shouting through the streets with the vehicle, while crowds cheered. The celebration ended with the burning in effigy of figures supposed to represent the persecutors of Hammond.

CHANGING MONEY TRICK BOX.



With this trick box you can make money change, from a penny into a dime or vice versa. Also make dimes appear and disappear at your command. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG.

1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

HINDOO FLOWER-POT TRICK



With this trick you can make a plant grow right up in a flower-pot, before the eyes of your audience. An ordinary empty earthen flower-pot is handed to the spectators for examination. A handkerchief is then placed over it, and you repeat a few magic words, and wave your wand over it. When the handkerchief is removed there is a beautiful plant, apparently in full bloom, in the pot. Full directions with each outfit. Price, 15 cents by mail, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

NOISY HANDKERCHIEF.



A great deal of amusement may be had with this little article. It imitates the blowing of the nose exactly, except that the noise is magnified at least a dozen times, and sounds like the bass-horn in a German band. This device is used by simply placing it between the teeth and blowing. The harder the blow the louder the noise. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

FIFTH.



Also known as a Japanese butterfly. A pleasing novelty enclosed in an envelope. When the envelope is opened Fifth will fly out through the air for several yards. Made of colored paper to represent a butterfly. Price, 10c.

By six inches wide.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

JAPANESE WATER FLOWERS



Without exception, the most beautiful and interesting things on the market. They consist of a dozen dried-up sprigs, neatly encased in handsomely decorated envelopes, just as they are imported from Japan. Place one sprig in a bowl of water, and it begins to exude various bright tints. Then it slowly opens out into various shapes of exquisite flowers. They are of all colors of the rainbow. It is very amusing to watch them take form.

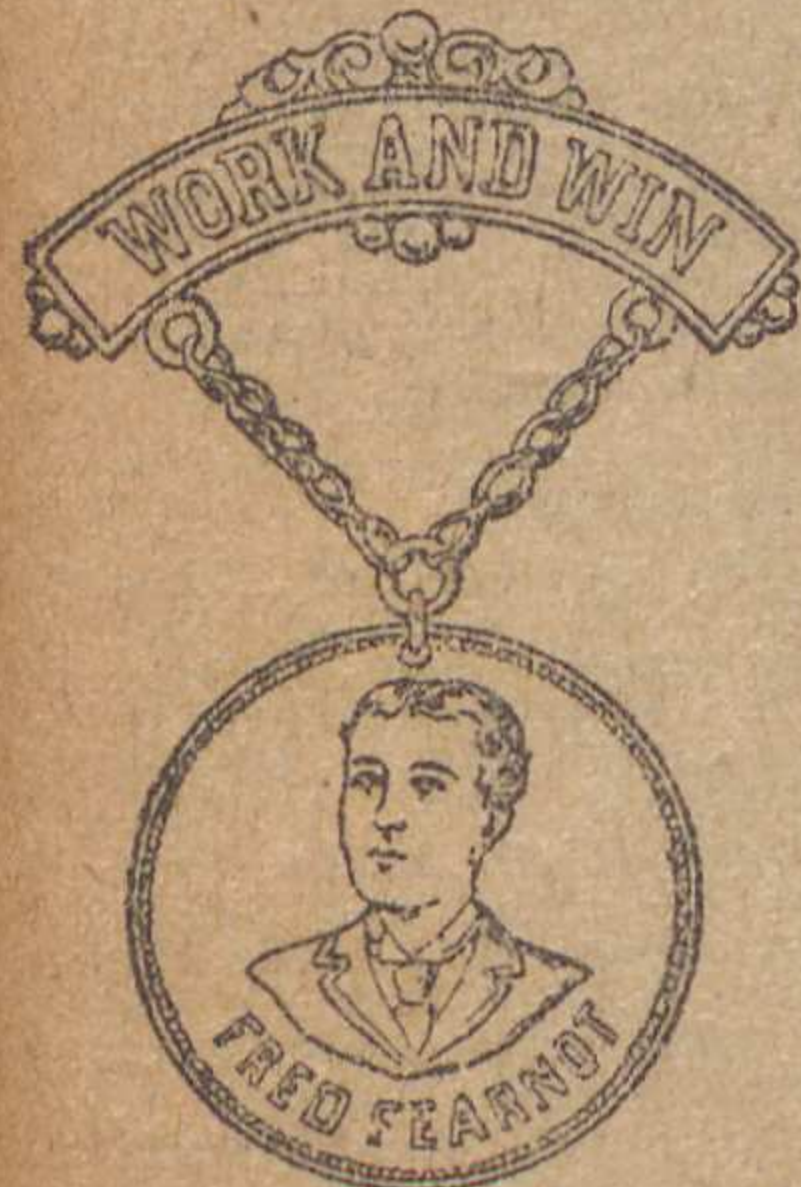
Small size, price 5 cents; large size, 10 cents a package, by mail, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

YOU ALL WANT THIS MEDAL!

You Can Get One for Six Cents!

Has a picture of Fred Fearnot on one side and Evelyn on the other. The chief characters of



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Solid-breech
Hammerless

.22 REPEATER

SOLID-BREECH HAMMERLESS SIDE-EJECTING

Sure Safe Shooting for Man or Boy—And a Simple Rifle to Care For

The Remington-UMC .22 Repeater is rifled, sighted and tested for accuracy by expert gunsmiths. It shoots as you hold. The simple, improved safety device on every Remington-UMC .22 repeater never fails to work. Accidental discharge is impossible.

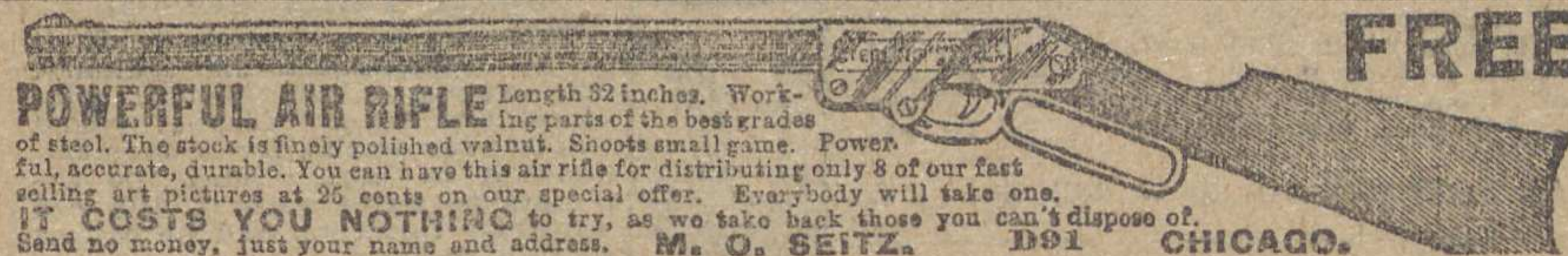
The Remington-UMC .22 Repeater is easily cared for. In taking down, your fingers are your only tools. The breech block, firing pin and extractor, come out in one piece—permitting the barrel to be cleaned from the breech.

The action handles .22 short, .22 long or .22 long rifle cartridges—any or all at the same time without adjustment.

Remington-UMC—the perfect shooting combination

REMINGTON ARMS-UNION METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO.

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POWERFUL AIR RIFLE

Length 32 inches. Working parts of the best grades of steel. The stock is finely polished walnut. Shoots small game. Power.

ful, accurate, durable. You can have this air rifle for distributing only 8 of our fast selling art pictures at 25 cents on our special offer. Everybody will take one. IT COSTS YOU NOTHING to try, as we take back those you can't dispose of. Send no money, just your name and address. M. O. SEITZ.

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FREE

IMITATION CIGAR BUTT.



It is made of a composition, exactly resembling a lighted cigar. The white ashes at the end and the imitation of tobacco-leaf being perfect. You can carelessly place it on top of the tablecloth or any other expensive piece of furniture, and await the result. After they see the joke everybody will have a good laugh. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

GOOD LUCK GUN FOB



The real western article, carried by the cowboys. It is made of fine leather, with a highly nickeled buckle. The holster contains a metal gun, of the same pattern as those used by all the most famous scouts. Any boy wearing one of these fobs will attract attention. It will give him an air of western romance. The prettiest and most serviceable watch fob ever made. Send for one to-day. Price 20 cents each by mail postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN,
419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

INDIAN FINGER TRAP.



A couple can be joined together and their struggle to be released only makes matters worse. It will hold them as tight as a rat-trap, and the more they try to pull away, the tighter it grips. Our traps are extra long. Price, 10c. each; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

L. Benarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Wizard Repeating LIQUID PISTOL



Will stop the most vicious dog (or man) without permanent injury. Perfectly safe to carry without danger of leakage. Fires and recharges by pulling the trigger. Loads from any Liquid. No cartridges required. Over six shots in one loading. All dealers, or by mail, 50c. Pistol with rubber covered holster, 55c. Holsters separate, 10c. Send money order. No postage stamps or coins accepted. PARKER, STEARNS & CO., 273 GEORGIA AVE., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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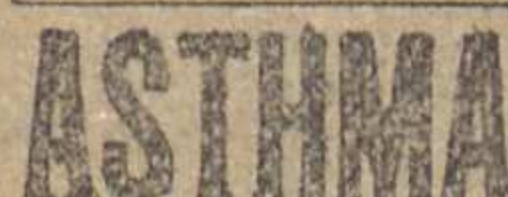


Any letter hand engraved, and a catalog of Badge Pins, Jewelry, Tricks, Jokes and Puzzles. Send TWO cents to pay for postage and handling. BEVERLY NOVELTY CO., 206J Beverly Road, Brooklyn, N. Y.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME



Ventriloquist Double Throat. Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. Loads of fun. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price: only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents, or 12 for 50 cents. Double Throat Co. Dpt. K Frenchtown, N. J.



ASTHMA. REMEDY sent to you on FREE TRIAL. If it cures, send \$1.00; if not, don't. Give express office. Write today. W. H. Sterling, 837 Ohio Ave., Sidney, Ohio.

GREAT PANEL TRICK.



This remarkable illusion consists of a simple, plain wooden panel, octagonal in shape, with no signs of a trick about it. The panel can be examined by any one; you then ask for a penny or silver coin and place it on the center of the panel; then at the word of command the coin immediately disappears. You do not change the position of the panel at any time, but hold it in full view of the audience all the time. The coin does not pass into the performer's hand, nor into his sleeve; neither does it drop upon the floor. The second illusion is as wonderful as the first; at the word of command the coin again appears upon the center of the panel as mysteriously as it went. We send full printed instructions by the aid of which any one can perform the trick, to the astonishment and delight of their friends. Price, 15c., 2 for 25c., by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



PICK-ME-OUT PUZZLE.

The head is finished in black japan, and in the mouth is a highly polished steel ball. The puzzle is to pick out the ball. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN,
419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered

to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

PIGGY IN A COFFIN.



This is a wicked pig that died at an early age, and here he is in his coffin ready for burial. There will be a great many mourners at his funeral, for this coffin, pretty as it looks, is very tricky, and the man who gets it open will feel real grief. The coffin is made of metal, perfectly shaped and beautifully lacquered. The trick is to open it to see the pig. The man that tries it gets his fingers and feelings hurt, and piggy comes out to grunt at his victims. The tubular end of the coffin, which everyone (in trying to open) presses inward, contains a needle which stabs the victim in his thumb or finger every time. This is the latest and a very "impressive" trick. It can be opened easily by anyone in the secret, and as a neat catch-joke to save yourself from a bore is unsurpassed. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MAGIC DIE BLOCK.



A wonderfully deceptive trick! A solid block, two inches square, is made to appear and disappear at pleasure. Borrowing a hat from one of the audience, you place

the block on top, sliding a cardboard cover (which may be examined) over it. At the word of command you lift the cover, the block is gone, and the same instant it falls to the floor, through the hat, with a solid thud, or into one of the spectator's hands. You may vary this excellent trick by passing the block through a table and on to the floor beneath, or through the lid of a desk into the drawer, etc. This trick never fails to astonish the spectators, and can be repeated as often as desired.

Price, 35c., postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

BUBBLER.



The greatest invention of the age. The box contains a blow-pipe of neatly enameled metal, and five tablets; also printed directions for playing numerous soap-bubble games, such as Floating Bubbles, Repeaters, Surprise Bubbles, Double Bubbles, The Boxers, Lung Tester, Supported Bubbles, Rolling Bubbles, Smoke Bubbles, Bouncing Bubbles, and many others. Ordinary bubble-blowing, with a pipe and soap water, are not in it with this scientific toy. It produces larger, more beautiful and stronger bubbles than you can get by the ordinary method. The games are intensely interesting, too.

Price, 12c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

LATEST GIANT TYPEWRITER.

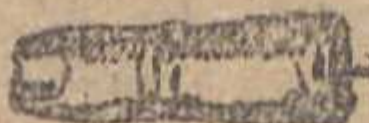


It is strongly made, but simple in construction, so that any one can quickly learn to operate it, and write as rapidly as they would with pen and ink. The letters of the al-

phabet most frequently used being so grouped as to enable one to write rapidly; the numerals, 1 to 10, and the punctuation marks being together. With this machine you can send letters, address envelopes, make out bills, and do almost any kind of work not requiring a large, expensive machine. With each typewriter we send a tube of ink and full instructions for using the machine. Price complete, \$1.00, by express.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE FINGER THROUGH THE HAT.



Having borrowed a hat from your friend, push your finger through the crown of it, and it is seen to move about. Though very amusing to others, the owner of the hat does not see the joke, but thinks it meanness to destroy his hat; yet when it is returned it is perfectly uninjured. Price, 10c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

RAVELLING JOKE.



Yards upon yards of laughs. Don't miss it! Everyone falls for this one. It consists of a nice little bobbin around which is wound a spool of thread. You pin the bobbin under the lapel of your coat, and pull the end of the thread through your button hole, then watch your friends try to pick the piece of thread off your coat.

Enough said! Get one! Price, 12c. each, by mail. Postage stamps taken same as money.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

LITTLE GIANT MICROSCOPE.



This powerful little instrument is made of oxidized metal. It stands on two supports made the exact length, to get a sharp, 1-inch focus on the object to be magnified. There is a high-powered lens of imported glass mounted in the circular eye-piece. It can be used to detect impurities in liquids, for examining cloths, or to magnify any object to enormous size. Can be carried in the vest pocket.

Price, 6c. each, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

SLICK TRICK PENCIL.



This one is a hummer! It is to all appearances an ordinary, but expensive lead pencil, with nickel trimmings. If your friend wants your pencil for a moment, hand it to him. When he attempts to write with it, the end instantly turns up, and he cannot write a stroke.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

H. F. LANG,

1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

IMITATION FLIES.

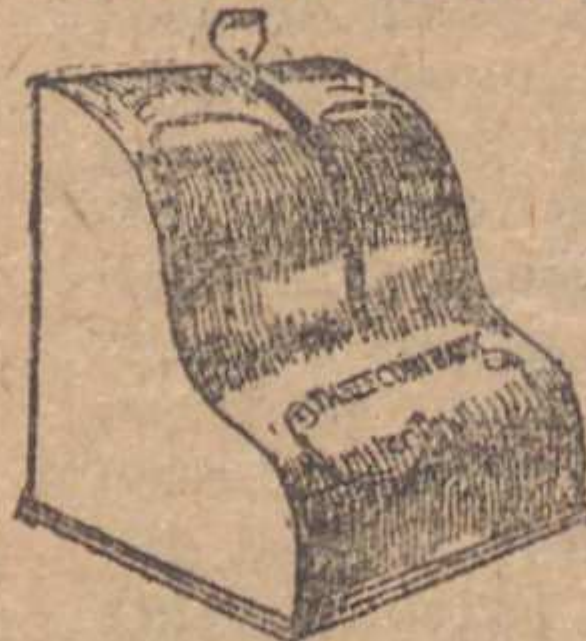


Absolutely true to Nature! A dandy scarf-pin and a rattling good joke. It is impossible to do these pins justice with a description. You have to see them to understand how lifelike they are. When people see them on you they want to brush them off. They wonder "why that fly sticks to you" so persistently. This is the most realistic novelty ever put on the market. It is a distinct ornament for anybody's necktie, and a decided joke on those who try to chase it.

Price, 10c. by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THREE COIN REGISTER BANK.



One of latest and best novelties on the market. It adds and registers Nickels, Dimes and Quarters put through the same slot. It holds coins to the amount of Ten Dollars, and then opens itself automatically. One lever action does all the work. Other banks only hold one kind of coin, whereas this one takes three kinds. The three coin bank is handsomely finished, is guaranteed mechanically perfect, operates with ease and accuracy, and does not get out of order.

Price, by express, \$1.00

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

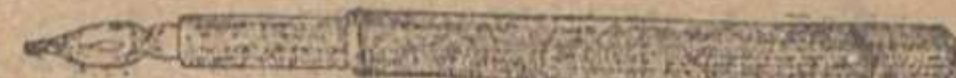
RUBBER TACKS.



They come six in a box. A wonderful imitation of the real tack. Made of rubber. The box in which they come is the ordinary tack box. This is a great parlor entertainer and you can play a lot of tricks with the tacks. Place them in the palm of your hand, point upward. Then slap the other hand over the tacks and it will seem as if you are committing suicide. Or you can show the tacks and then put them in your mouth and chew them, making believe you have swallowed them. Your friends will think you are a magician. Then, again, you can exhibit the tacks and then quickly push one in your cheek or somebody else's cheek and they will shriek with fear. Absolutely harmless and a very practical and funny joke. Price by mail, 10c. a box of 6 tacks; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

NEW TEN-CENT FOUNTAIN PEN.



One of the most peculiar and mystifying pens on the market. It requires no ink. All you have to do is to dip it in water, and it will write for an indefinite period. The secret can only be learned by procuring one, and you can make it a source of both pleasure and amusement by claiming to your friends what it can do and then demonstrating the fact. Moreover, it is a good pen, fit for practical use, and will never leak ink into your pocket, as a defective fountain pen might do.

Price, 10c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SLIDE THE PENCIL.



The pencil that keeps them guessing. Made of wood and lead just like an ordinary pencil, but when your victim starts to write with it—presto! the lead disappears. It is so constructed that the slightest pressure on the paper makes the lead slide into the wood. Very funny and a practical joke.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

BLACK-EYE JOKE.



New and amusing joker. The victim is told to hold the tube close to his eye so as to exclude all light from the back, and then to remove the tube until pictures appear in the center. In trying to locate the pictures he will receive the finest black-eye you ever saw. We furnish a small box of blackening preparation with each tube, so the joke can be used indefinitely. Those not in the trick will be caught every time. Absolutely harmless. Price by mail 15c. each; 2 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

PIN MOUSE.



It is made of cast metal and has the exact color, shape and size of a live mouse. Pinned on your or somebody else's clothes, will have a startling effect upon the spectators. The screaming fun had by this little novelty, especially in the presence of ladies, is more than can be imagined. If a cat happens to be there, there's no other fun to be compared with it.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

TRICK CIGARETTE BOX.



This one is a corker! Get a box right away, if you want to have a barrel of joy. Here's the secret: It looks like an ordinary red box of Turkish cigarettes. But it contains a trigger, under which you place a paper cap. Offer your friend a smoke and he raises the lid of the box. That explodes the cap, and if you are wise you will get out of sight with the box before he gets over thinking he was shot.

Price, 15c., postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

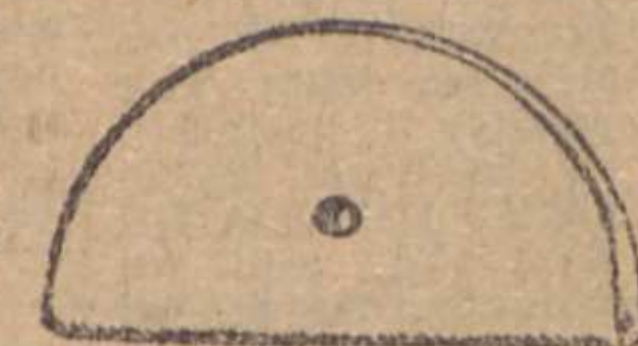
LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled, are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.
M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

WHISTLEPHONE.



This is one of the greatest musical instruments ever invented. It is made entirely of metal and is almost invisible when in use. With it, in a few moments, you can learn to play all kinds of tunes, have lots of fun, please and amuse your friends and make some money, too. Fine for either song or piano accompaniment or by itself alone. You place the whistlephone in the mouth with half circle out, place end of tongue to rounded part and blow gently as if to cool the lips. A few trials will enable one to play any tune or air.

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342 Beating the Market; or, A Boy Broker's Deal. (A Wall Street story.)
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